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CHILDREN'S STORIES
FROM THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS

..BY..
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RAPHAEL TUCK & SONS, LTD.

• LONDON • PARIS • NEW YORK •

DESIGNED & PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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From "THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE"



From "SINDBAD THE SAILOR"

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From "CODADAD AND HIS BROTHERS"



From "PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY BANOU"

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS

WHEN you open the book of the Arabian Nights, you open the door into Wonderland. What you read of, I may say, is even more wonderful than Fairyland. The scenes are set in the gorgeous colours of the East, the actors live a magical existence, and we hold our breath at the marvels that are told us.

" 'Alf Laylah wa Laylah—A Thousand Nights and a Night,' is believed to be in form and substance the Arabic translation of a Persian book, 'Hazár Afsánah' or Thousand Tales.

" Mohammed-ibn-Ishak states that the book was compiled by or for Humai, daughter of Bahman Ishak (Artaxerxes) whose

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS

mother, according to Al-Masudi, was Queen Esther of the Old Testament."

But there is a great difference of opinion as to the authorship of these stories and as to the date when they first appeared to charm and fascinate their many readers, some maintaining that they are not older than the fifteenth century, and that they were written not by one but by various authors, which latter theory is very likely correct.

It does not matter much to us, however, when or by whom the tales were written; let us rejoice that we have them. The stories in the present edition have been specially set forth for young people, and are the choicest in the marvellous collection, so without more ado we will rub Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp and command the Genie to transport us to this realm of magic and delight.

EDRIC VREDENBURG.



From "ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP"



From "THE ENCHANTED HORSE"

SCHEHERAZADE AND THE SULTAN

A SULTAN of India named Schah-riar was deceived by his Queen, and after he had her put to death, he determined that no woman should ever again have the opportunity of imposing upon him. In order to be certain of this, and yet avoid the loneliness of single life, he married a new wife each day, and always had her executed the following morning.

Consternation spread over the land, for the fairest and best damsels were sacrificed to the monarch's cruel whim. Every father and mother dwelt in fear and trembling lest their daughter should be selected as the next victim; and Schah-riar was loathed by his once loyal subjects.

At this juncture Scheherazade, the virtuous and beautiful daughter of the Grand Vizier, came to her father and entreated him to offer her to the Sultan for his bride. The Vizier thought she must assuredly have taken leave of her senses.

Scheherazade, however, persisted in her idea, and confided to her parent that she had made a plan whereby she hoped to win the goodwill of the Sultan, and put an end to his folly.

The Sultan consented to accept Scheherazade as his bride for a day, and the Vizier returned to his daughter and tearfully related the success of his mission.

She then called Dinarzade, her younger sister, aside, and said, "It is my purpose to entreat the Sultan to permit me to spend the last night of my life in thy company. An he grants my supplication, do thou lay thee down near the couch where I recline beside the Sultan, and before the day dawns ask me to relate one of the tales I have been wont to tell thee."


Dinarzade gladly acceded to her sister's request, and the Sultan's permission having been obtained, she spent the night at the foot of the couch whereon her sister and Schah-riar reposed.

Ere the day dawned, Dinarzade awakened her sister, "O sister mine, I pray thee recount me one of thy delectable stories; never again shall I have the joy of hearing aught so delightful." Instead of replying to Dinarzade, Scheherazade requested the Sultan's leave to indulge her sister's wish. Schah-riar assented and listened enthralled to the tale his bride narrated.

When, at sunrise, the monarch was obliged to go about his affairs, he could by no means make up his mind to have Scheherazade executed, and thus lose the remainder of the tale.

So for a thousand and one nights did Scheherazade relate one tale after another, and the Sultan meanwhile learnt to love and trust the sweet recounter. He thereupon renounced his cruel vow, and taking Scheherazade to his heart, made her the most happy and contented of women.

The stories that follow are a selection from those related by Scheherazade to the Sultan Schah-riar and her sister Dinarzade.



ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

IN days of yore two brothers dwelt in a certain town of Persia. Cassim, the elder, had a rich wife and became a prosperous merchant ; but Ali Baba married a woman as poor as himself, and earned a scant livelihood by vending wood, that he collected in the forest.

One day, whilst occupied in cutting wood and loading it on his three asses, Ali Baba was surprised to see a body of horsemen riding in his direction. Fearing that they might be robbers, he hastily concealed his asses in a thicket, and climbed up a tree which grew upon a high rock. As he lay hidden amongst the branches he was able to observe the approaching riders, without himself being seen.

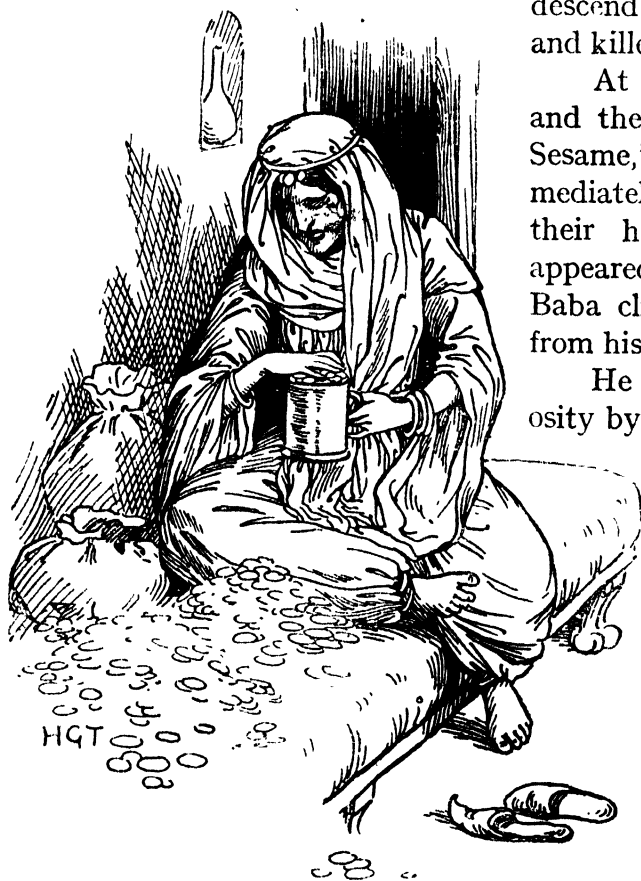
There were forty of them, strong active men, each burdened with what Ali Baba took to be booty seized in a plundering

expedition. As they came beneath the tree whereon he perched, each man dismounted, tethered and unloaded his horse and took off the saddle bags which were full of gold and silver. They stood behind their Captain, who cried "Open Sesame" (Sesame is a small grain), and as he uttered these words a door opened widely in the rock-face, and the thieves, for they were such in very deed, entered one after another, each bearing a burden. When the last man was in, the door closed of itself, leaving no trace of its whereabouts on the rock-face.

The thieves remained some time in the cave to which they had carried their treasure, and meanwhile Ali Baba dared not descend for fear of being caught and killed.

At length they came out, and the Captain cried, "Shut Sesame," when the door immediately closed. Mounting their horses they soon disappeared from view, and Ali Baba climbed cautiously down from his hiding place.

He was filled with curiosity by what he had just seen, and determined to try what fortune those strange words, "Open Sesame," would bring him; so he made his way to the spot, where the Captain had stood, and uttered the formula aloud. The door flew open, revealing a large cave lighted by means of



a cleft in the top of the rock, and filled with bales of merchandise, camel-loads of silks, brocades and carpets, in addition to bags upon bags of gold and silver.

Ali Baba hastily collected several sacks of gold coins, and loading them on his asses covered them over with fuel; this done, he cried, "Shut Sesame," whereat the portal swung to, and he set out for home.

He drove his beasts into his own little yard, and making the gate fast, uncovered the sacks of gold coins and carried them in to his wife.

When she beheld all this money, the good woman feared that her husband had taken to thieving and berated him soundly; but she was pacified when Ali Baba had related his adventure, and began thereupon to count the gold piece by piece.

Her spouse watched her awhile, then he cried, "O foolish woman, how much time wilt thou waste counting the coin, rather let us hasten to bury it so that none can guess our secret."

Quoth his wife, "Thou speakest wisdom, do thou dig a hole in the garden, and I meanwhile will hie me to thy brother's house to borrow his scales, wherewith we can weigh the money and learn somewhat of its value." "Do as thou wilt," replied Ali Baba, "but keep close guard upon thy tongue;" having given her promise to observe his counsel, she hurried round to Cassim's house and begged her sister-in-law to lend her the scales. "Abide here a moment whilst I search for them," replied Cassim's wife, who was greatly puzzled as to the other's need for a pair of scales, considering that she was too poor to have enough of anything to weigh. Cassim's wife was a wily woman, and she soon hit upon a plan whereby she might be enabled to learn what was afoot. Procuring the scales, she proceeded to smear the bottom of the measure with wax and suet, reckoning that by some lucky chance a particle of that which was to be weighed might adhere thereto and permit her to gratify her curiosity.

The wife of Ali Baba took the scales home, suspecting nothing, and set about measuring the coins, and afterwards aiding



her husband to stow them away and cover them over with earth.

This done she returned the scales to her kinswoman, and, in her excitement and haste, failed to note that a coin had stuck to the bottom of the measure. No sooner was her back turned than Cassim's wife eagerly examined the measure and found the piece of gold. "So ho! she has gold coins to weigh," cried the astonished woman, and she wondered and wondered whence the money came, seeing that Ali Baba had always been so poor, and could hardly wait until her husband arrived

at home that evening to tell him the news.

"What thinkest thou," said she, "thy brother hath so much gold he must needs weigh it, instead of counting it as we do," and all that night they could not sleep a wink for discussing this strange affair.

Cassim's heart was full of envy and jealousy as he rose next morning, and he went betimes to Ali Baba's house crying, "O my brother, long hast thou thrown dust in mine eyes, with thy pretence of poverty and indigence, yet hast thou such store of gold thou must needs weigh it with scales."

"I know not of what thou pratest," said Ali Baba; but he

feared that in some way his secret had been betrayed. "Thou canst not deceive me," replied Cassim, wrathfully displaying the gold coin which was of ancient date. "Thou knowest thou hast thousands like this one which my wife found sticking to the measure."

Ali Baba perceived that it would be better to acquaint his brother with the whole matter, as, by withholding the truth, he would expose himself to suspicion and unpleasantness.

Cassim heard him to the end and then exclaimed: "Now shall I go to the spot thou hast described, and say the words that caused the door to open, and if thou hast in any particular deceived me, beware of my wrath." Cassim set out without delay in search of the cave, driving ten mules before him, each one bearing an empty chest upon its back.

When he came to the rock and tree described by his brother, he pronounced the words, "Open Sesame," and the door opened at once and closed behind him when he was inside the cave. Never had he spent such a happy time, he walked about gloating upon the riches he saw around him, and planning how to secure the lot for himself. He selected as many sacks of gold as his mules could carry, and went to the door with the view of loading them up, but his mind was so filled with plots and schemes, he could not recollect the magic words that would open the door. He cried, "Open O Barley," but the portal remained closed, next he tried in turn all manner of names; but the one word that eluded his memory was the one required to open the door. As he paced up and down in desperation, he heard the clatter of hooves, and knew his last moments had come. The robbers returning to their cave, were surprised to see the mules grazing outside, and suspecting that all was not well, they at once drew their sabres and hastened to the door, which opened when the Captain uttered the usual words.

Cassim made a daring dash for liberty, but ran full tilt against the Captain, and was immediately attacked, and split in twain by the sabre of one of the robbers.

The thieves soon put their place in order ; but did not miss the sacks purloined by Ali Baba. They were greatly exercised in their minds as to how Cassim had gained admittance to the cave and discovered their secret ; but finding no solution to the mystery had perforce to content themselves. They quartered Cassim's body and nailed the parts on either side within the door, as a warning to any other intruder who dared to enter the cave ; and then left the forest to pursue their nefarious occupation of killing and plunder.

Cassim's wife grew uneasy as the hours passed, and he returned not, so she went to Ali Baba saying, " Cassim hath not come home, thou knowest whither he went, thinkest thou some ill-chance hath befallen him ? "

Ali Baba consoled her with hopes that he would come home when the cloak of night had fallen on the city. But when the hours of darkness were well-nigh spent, and still he did not return, the woman repented right bitterly of her curiosity and jealousy, which she feared had led to a disaster.

Ali Baba set out with his asses at daybreak in search of Cassim, and when he perceived the blood-stains in front of the cave, he apprehended that some grave trouble had happened to his brother. He hastily entered the cave, and was horrified to find the gruesome remains nailed to the door. In fear and trembling, he removed the quarters, and wrapping them in a piece of cloth, placed them on an ass, concealing the package with fuel and sticks. He made his way back to the city with the greatest caution, and knocked softly at the door of Cassim's house. Morgiana, a slave-girl, answered his summons, and Ali Baba, aware of her discretion and intelligence, sought her aid to conceal the truth about her master's misfortune, from all the neighbours.

Leaving her to prepare the body for burial, he sought his sister-in-law and broke the sad news of Cassim's death. When the widow's first grief had somewhat subsided, Morgiana was called in to discuss ways and means of allaying all suspicions, and

she undertook to solve this difficult matter to the best of her ability.

No sooner had Ali Baba departed, than Morgiana hied her to the druggist's shop and asked for a medicine for her master, who lay at death's door.

That evening she again visited the druggist's and purchased some more medicine, sobbing the while and crying, "Alack! I fear I shall lose my good master." Presently the sound of wailing arose from Cassim's house, and Ali Baba and his wife hastened thither, weeping and crying aloud, that their brother was no more.

E r e dawn the next day, Morgiana veiled her face, and fared forth to the stall of Baba Mustapha, an old cobbler, and also a maker of shrouds,





whose shop was always opened earlier than any other.

She put a gold piece in his hand, saying, "O cobbler, I have work for thee to do, and gold to pay thee with, bind a handkerchief over thine eyes and come with me." At first the cobbler demurred; but the sight of a second gold piece decided him, and he permitted the slave-girl to blindfold him and lead him to Cassim's house. There he was ushered into a darkened room and bidden to stitch together the quarters of the corpse, and afterwards to make a shroud wherewith to cover it. After his

task was done, he received the promised reward, and Morgiana again blindfolded him and led him back to his shop, enjoining the strictest secrecy, lest woe befall him.

Cassim's funeral obsequies were now duly carried out, and neighbours and ministers of the mosque accompanied the body to the grave; whilst the quarter, where he had dwelt, re-echoed with the lamentations of the women-folk, as was customary on such occasions. So was he buried, and none surmised the true manner of his demise.

At the desire of the widow, Ali Baba and his wife made their home with her, and the sacks of gold were brought thither secretly at dead of night. Cassim's son now carried on his father's business, and relied greatly on Ali Baba's advice and affectionate interest, which never failed him.

Meanwhile the forty thieves had returned to the cave, and were amazed to find that Cassim's remains had disappeared in a most mysterious fashion.

Quoth the Captain, "O my men, there is no doubt we have been betrayed, and it concerneth us to discover who knoweth the secret of our cave, which hath been so well guarded since the days of our forefathers. Let us seek him out, and do him to death, lest our treasures be filched from us."

One of the band offered to go to the city disguised as a merchant and, by gossiping here and there, endeavour to find out whether any townsman had recently died under mysterious circumstances, and, if so, to locate his house and associates.





' An I succeed not in my quest," said he, " my life shall be forfeit."

Day dawned as he reached the city, and finding the shops still closed, he wandered about the market-place until chance directed his footsteps to Baba Mustapha's stall, where the cobbler sat on his stool busily plying needle and thread. The robber watched him awhile, and then said, " I marvel thou canst see to sew, 'tis scarce daylight yet, and thou art old."

" Ay ;" replied the other, " there is naught amiss with my sight ; but yesterday, I sewed together a dead body in a room almost dark."

The thief pricked up his ears, " a dead body," said he, " nay, thou jestest, wherefore should'st thou sew a corpse ? " " Ask me no questions," answered the cobbler, " 'tis no affair of thine."

" I desire not to pry into thy secrets ; but if thou would'st earn a piece of gold, lead me to the house where that dead man was," said the thief. Baba Mustapha shook his head, and rejoined, " that I cannot do, for a woman led me thither, and after we had gone a short distance, she bound the eyes of me, and brought me back in the same manner."

" Perchance thou could'st lead me in that direction if

we go to the same spot and I too bind thine eyes, 'twere well worth another gold piece to thee, an thou canst find the site," persisted the thief. They walked along and presently Baba Mustapha cried, "Here is the place where mine eyes were bandaged." The kerchief was tied over the cobbler's eyes, and his wits, sharpened by his lust for gold, directed his footsteps towards the quarter whither Morgiana had led him. As he walked he counted his footsteps until he came before Cassim's house, where he stopped crying, "so many steps did I take yesterday, this must be the place." The bandit marked the door with a piece of chalk, and relieving the cobbler of his bandage, asked him whether he could tell him whose house this was.

"I know not," said he, "this street is unfamiliar to me," and the thief realizing that there was nothing more to be gained from the cobbler, paid him his due and himself hastened back to the trysting place in the forest.

Shortly after Morgiana fared forth on an errand, and the chalk marks on the door attracted her attention.

"Now who hath done this," said she, "maybe some enemy of my master, who would know the house by this sign." She pondered awhile, and then procuring a piece of chalk marked all the doors of the neighbours' houses in the same way; and being discreet kept the matter to herself.

The thief meanwhile was boasting to his comrades of his sagacity in so quickly finding the clue; and soon he and the Captain were on their way to the marked house.

When they reached the street, the bandit pointed out the house with the chalk mark on the door; but the Captain espied another and yet another, all distinguished in the same manner. The boaster was covered with confusion, for he could not recognize his own mark, and he returned to the forest to suffer death for having failed in his undertaking.

A second robber, undeterred by his comrade's fate, now volunteered to pursue the inquiry, so off he went to Baba

Mustapha's stall, and bribed him with a gold piece, to lead him to the place where he had taken the first thief.

"'Tis a lucky day," muttered the cobbler, and the pair soon found their way to the house where Ali Baba now dwelt. The bandit had supplied himself with some red chalk with which he marked the door in an inconspicuous place and gaily hied him to join his comrades.

"O Captain," said he, "this time there is no mistake," and he begged his chief to return with him at once. But the thief had not reckoned for Morgiana's sharp eyes, which soon detected the marks on the door, and it was the work of a moment for her

to rub the red chalk on the neighbours' doors as well.

The Captain was again disappointed, as his guide could in no way distinguish the house, and the latter returned to the forest to the doom that awaited him. The Captain fearing to lose more of his men decided to investigate matters himself, and accordingly sought out Baba Mustapha, who gladly undertook a task that had already brought him such a golden harvest. The Captain regarded the house carefully, until a picture of it was impressed upon his mind so that he would again recognize it. He then rejoined his men, and ordered them to procure nineteen mules and thirty-eight large leather jars, one



full of oil, the others empty. When everything was ready, the Captain disguised as a trader, drove the mules into the city at dusk one evening. Now each mule was laden with two of the leathern jars; but they were no longer empty, for each, save the one that was full of oil, contained a robber fully armed. The outsides of the jars had been smeared with oil, and the tops firmly closed down, except for a small rent that served as a breathing space.

It chanced that Ali Baba was taking a stroll in front of his door, when the Captain came along with his mules. Seeing that he belonged to the house, the bandit approached him, and petitioned for a night's lodging in his courtyard. "I have travelled far, and being overtaken by darkness, know not where to find a resting place at this late hour, so grant me permission to stay with thee," he pleaded.

Ali Baba, who did not recognize the Captain in his disguise, gave him kindly welcome, and permitted him to lead his mules into an empty shed. He bade Morgiana place a savoury meal before the stranger, and prepare a bed in the guest chamber, and full of kindly intent, sent a boy slave to fetch grain and water for the mules. The Captain tended his beasts, and let down the jars, before entering the house, where he was well received by his host. As Ali Baba wished him good night, he called to Morgiana in the robber's hearing, to see that his guest lacked nothing for his comfort, then he added, "and do thou also see, O Morgiana, that the slave-boy, Abdullah, hath a clean suit of white clothes ready for me to-morrow early, as I would go to the Hammam (Baths). Moreover, make me a bowl of broth overnight, that I may drink it on my return."

When Ali Baba had retired, the Captain went privily to the shed and took the lid off each jar, whispering as he did so, "when ye hear my voice, come out without delay, and await my orders." With this he retired to the chamber that had been assigned him, and lay upon the bed to rest awhile, ere summoning his men to do the cruel deed he contemplated.

Morgiana, meanwhile, was busy in the kitchen preparing

the broth, when suddenly her lamps went out, and she found that all her oil was spent. "Now, what's to do," said she, standing perplexed, until Abdullah suggested that she could fetch a little oil out of the trader's jars. "'Tis well advised," cried she, and taking her oil can, went across the yard, to the shed where the jars stood in rows. As she came to the first one she was amazed to hear a voice within whispering, "Is it time for us to come out, O Captain?"

Being quick of wit, the maid hesitated not, but replied in a voice that she made to resemble the trader's; "the hour is not yet come," and she passed on from one jar to the other, always with the same result. At last she came to the jar of oil from which she filled her can.

"Heaven protect us," she murmured, as she returned to the kitchen, "my master hath harboured eight and thirty thieves, and these await the command of their captain to come forth to plunder and kill us."

Morgiana replenished and lighted her lamp, and fetched enough oil to fill a great cauldron which she set upon the fire. When the oil was boiling hot, she baled it out in potfuls, and bearing them to the shed poured enough in every jar to destroy the robber within.

It was done so expeditiously and silently, that no one in the house was aroused, not even Abdullah, who dozed in the hall. When she was satisfied that all the men were dead, she went back to the kitchen and, shutting the door, brewed Ali Baba's broth; keeping a wary eye on the shed meanwhile.

Ere long the Captain awoke, and opening his window gave a signal to his men to come forth; but hearing no reply he went quietly to the shed purposing to arouse them from their slumbers.

When he discovered the fate that had overtaken his band, so fearful was he for his own safety, that he lost no time in climbing the wall. He escaped through the garden, recking not the sharp eyes that watched him from the kitchen window.

Ali Baba rose before dawn and went to the Hammam, and

on his return, being surprised to see the oil jars still in the shed, he enquired of Morgiana why the trader had not taken his wares to market.

Thereupon the girl related the adventures of the night, whereof the household was still in ignorance, and also confessed to what she had done in regard to the chalk marks.

Ali Baba could scarce find words wherewith to thank her, when he realized what the brave girl had done for him. He conferred her freedom upon her, and asked what other boon he could grant. She replied, "O master, let us lose no time in talk, for the dead must be buried



forthwith, so that none discover our secret." So Ali Baba dug a great trench in the garden, laid the bodies therein, and concealed the weapons and jars. Abdullah gradually disposed of the mules in the market, and so every trace of the robbers disappeared.

The Captain betook himself to the forest full of rage and bitterness, and finding the loneliness unbearable, he determined to avenge the loss of his lusty men by slaying Ali Baba, and furthermore decided to set about the matter without delay.

Next day he disguised himself in the garb of a merchant, and went to the city, hoping to hear that Ali Baba had been seized and imprisoned for the wholesale murders, that had been committed on his premises.

In this he was disappointed, so he made up his mind to punish Ali Baba when he could do so without danger to himself. In order to watch for this opportunity he hired a shop in the Bazaar, and stocked it with goods from the cave, which he brought in secretly under cover of night.

It so chanced that his shop faced the warehouse of Ali Baba's nephew, son of the defunct Cassim ; and he, being a handsome, civil young fellow, soon attracted the notice of Cogia Hassan, as the robber now called himself, and a friendship sprang up between them. For some time the Captain could obtain no tidings of Ali Baba ; but on a day of days the latter happened to pay a visit to his nephew, and the watchful eyes opposite at once recognized him.

When the Captain learnt that Ali Baba was the young man's uncle, his friendship increased by leaps and bounds. He presented the youth with gifts, and frequently asked him to sit at meat with him, feeding him with the choicest of dishes.

Desiring to make a return for this hospitality, the young man consulted his uncle about the matter, as his house was too small to adequately entertain so distinguished a guest. Ali Baba at once suggested that his nephew should invite his friend to take a walk on the morrow, which was Friday, the day when all the important merchants closed their shops. He could then, as it

were by chance, bring him to Ali Baba's home and invite him in, and a fine collation would be ready prepared.

The youth was pleased with the plan, and the next day, by some pretext brought his friend to Ali Baba's door. Although the robber desired nothing more than to gain admission to Ali Baba's house, he yet hesitated to do so in the guise of an invited guest. He endeavoured to excuse himself; but the young man was persistent, and fearing to raise suspicion, the Captain had perforce to enter, smiling as one who felt greatly honoured.

Ali Baba was delighted to welcome his nephew's friend, and insisted upon him sitting at table with them.

"O my Lord," said Cogia Hassan, "indeed I fain would stay, but I dare not sit at meat with thee, for by order of my physician, I may not eat aught that hath been prepared with salt."

"An if that be all," cried Ali Baba, "I can at once give instructions to that effect, for the viands are not yet cooked, so stay thou must."

Ali Baba went to the kitchen, and bade Morgiana avoid the use of salt in any of the dishes, whereupon she asked, "Who is this man that eateth meat without salt?" "What matters that to thee," responded her master, "do thou but hasten with the meal."

Morgiana busied herself with the cooking, but her mind was occupied with speculations about this stranger who would eat no salt, and she determined to have a look at him. To this end she offered to assist Abdullah to spread the feast: and no sooner did she see Cogia Hassan than she knew him to be the robber Captain. As she regarded him attentively, she observed a dagger concealed beneath his robe, and divined the reason of his refusal to partake of salt in the house of an enemy.

By the time the meal was served, Morgiana had conceived a plan whereby she could ensure the safety of her master, and his nephew for whom she had a great liking. She hastily changed her dress, and donning fine garments such as dancers wear, veiled



"MORGIANA SWAYED FROM SIDE TO SIDE IN A DANCE OF SURPASSING BEAUTY"

her face, and stuck a sharp dagger in her belt. When these preparations were complete she called to Abdullah, "Go fetch thy tambourine that we may play and dance to amuse our master's guests."

Just as supper was finished and the Captain was cogitating how best he could fall upon Ali Baba and dispatch him, and, if occasion arose, his nephew also, Abdullah and Morgiana entered the room playing and dancing. As Abdullah struck his tambourine the girl danced with such grace and skill that the onlookers were vastly pleased. She performed various steps, and then drawing her poniard, swayed from side to side in a dance of surpassing beauty. Finally she took the tambourine from Abdullah in her left hand, and still holding the dagger in her right, went round for largess as was the custom with such dancers.

Ali Baba and his nephew each threw a gold piece into the extended tambourine, and Cogia Hassan drew out his purse, but ere he could extract a coin therefrom, Morgiana, with a movement quick as lightning, plunged her poniard into his breast.

The robber fell back dead, and Ali Baba cried in wrath and dismay, "O Morgiana, what hast thou done, wherefore bringest thou



ruin upon us all?" Morgiana snatched the dagger from under the dead man's robe and displayed it, saying, "Indeed, my master, I have saved thee from deadly peril, this villain who would not eat thy salt was the Captain of the robber band."

Ali Baba wept as he thanked the maid for again saving his life, and said, "Thou deservest the best I can give thee, and if thou be willing, O Son of my Brother, take the girl for thy wife, and cherish her as thy preserver and mine."

The youth was delighted to do his uncle's bidding, for he had long looked with favour on the faithful slave, whom he deemed worthy of the highest respect and honour. The Captain was hastily interred with his comrades, and none knew of the matter, until their bones were discovered long after Ali Baba and all his kin were dead and gone. The marriage of Cassim's son with Morgiana was soon arranged, and the ceremony performed with great pomp, and magnificence. A sumptuous feast gave satisfaction to all the friends and neighbours, who joined in the merry-making with right good will.

It was some time before Ali Baba ventured into the robbers' cave; but at last he plucked up courage to do so, and found everything unchanged since his last visit.

Feeling assured that all the bandits must be dead, he regarded himself as their heir, and from time to time carried away as much gold as he required.

When he grew old, he confided his secret to his nephew, who handed it down to his posterity, so that for many generations the family lived prosperously.

Ali Baba himself rose to a position of worth and dignity in the town, where he had formerly been a pauper, and he did all that he could to deserve the blessings that the secret treasure brought him.



THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE

THERE was once a fisherman who had but little luck, and was often sore put about to find the wherewithal to feed himself, his wife, and his three children.

One memorable day he went down to the sea, and cast his net, as was his custom ; but when he tried to haul it in, he found it so weighty that he was obliged to wade into the water before he could land it. He opened the meshes eagerly ; but in lieu of a great catch of fish, found a large brass vase securely closed by means of a leaden cap, which bore upon it the impress of the seal of King Solomon, the son of David.

Upon examining the jar, the fisherman's disappointment gave way to surprise, "this will bring good money at the brass-bazaar," said he to himself. "It feeleth weighty, so perchance it containeth somewhat of value, it would be well to open it and look inside."

He loosened the cap and peered into the depths of the jar ; but it appeared to be quite empty, and it was not until he had set it down in front of him, that he observed a thick smoke arising therefrom.

The smoke grew denser and spread and spread, trailing over land and sea and rising spirally towards the heavens. Then gradually it collected together and condensed into the form of a gigantic Genie, whose head touched the clouds whilst his feet were on earth.

The fisherman trembled for fear of the terrible creature he had liberated from the jar, and not even when the Genie called to him "be of good cheer, O Fisherman," did he feel reassured.

"Now, wherefore should I be of good cheer, O Genie?" he inquired ; and the reply came, "because I am going to kill thee and then thou wilt know neither want nor care." The fisherman's teeth chattered as he cried, "why wouldst thou kill me, have I done aught to deserve such treatment?" The Genie was obdurate, "I have naught to say," he answered, "save that thou mayest choose what manner of death thou wilt die."

"Verily, 'tis a poor recompense for bringing thee out of the depths of the sea and giving thee thy freedom," rejoined the trembling one.

"O Fisherman," said the Genie, "know that I am a spirit who hath disobeyed the word of Solomon, the King, and I have been enclosed within that jar by his command. Moreover he hath sealed my prison-house with his own seal and 'twas he who had me cast into the depths of the sea, where I have lain for many centuries.

"In the first hundred years of my captivity, I said in my heart, whoso shall deliver me, him will I enrich greatly ; but none came to my aid.

"In the next hundred years I thought to acquaint my liberator

with all the secret treasures of the earth — and yet none came. Centuries were young and grew old, and still I stayed away down in the ocean. At last I grew wroth and vowed that if my rescuer ever came, I would slay him as soon as I regained my freedom and now thou knowest why thou must die.”

“O Genie, have mercy,” the fisherman implored; but finding his prayer

availed him not, he bethought himself of an artifice whereby he might outwit the Genie who, like all his tribe, was slow of thought.

“Since there be no escape,” said he, “I shall consider what will be the easiest way to die; but first I prithee satisfy my curiosity as to how thou camest here; sure am I thou wast not in that jar, which is not of a size to hold thy foot, let alone thy great body.”

“None-the-less” replied the Genie, “I was in there even as I told thee.”

“Thou liest,” said the crafty one, “I could not credit such a tale unless I proved it with mine own eyes.”

“See for thyself, thou unbeliever,” raged the Genie as he transformed himself into a vapour, which collecting entered the jar, little by little until all had disappeared within.



In a trice the fisherman had clapped down the leaden cover, and the power of Solomon's seal upon it was such that the Genie could not push it open.

"Now can I tell thee what death *thou* wilt die," mocked the fisherman. "No choice is thine, for back into the sea goest thou, and there canst thou stay till the crack of doom." The Genie on finding himself duped became, all at once, very humble, "O good Fisherman," said he, "let me out, I did but jest with thee, and would not harm thee if I could;" but the other would not be beguiled.

"Let me out and I will make thee rich," pleaded the prisoner.

"Nay," said the Fisherman, "an I trusted thee, thou wouldst assuredly treat me as King Yunan treated Douban the Physician."

"What story is that?" the Genie inquired.

"Listen," answered the fisherman, and related the following tale, somewhat in this wise:--

THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK KING AND DOUBAN THE PHYSICIAN.

Yunan, King of Greece, ruled over great territories and possessed vast riches, and had all the heart of man could desire, until he became stricken with a leprosy. Physician after physician was called in; all manner of decoctions, unguents, powders and draughts were tried in vain, nothing could cure the terrible malady. The King was in despair, for what availed him riches and honours now?

On a day a clever physician named Douban arrived at the court and undertook to cure the King without draught or ointment.

The King, delighted at such a prospect, promised a most rich reward to the physician, if he proved as good as his word.

Douban then presented His Majesty with a bat, in the hollow handle of which he had inserted certain potent drugs. He requested the King to use this bat when he rode forth to play at "pall and mall." "O auspicious One," said he, "drive the ball right vigorously, so that thy palm grows moist and permits the medicine, within the bat, to permeate thy body. Afterwards make thy ablution in the Hammam-bath and then, resting awhile, thou wilt arise from thy couch, free from thy disease."

The King followed Douban's directions, and it came to pass that he was healed, as the wise man had foretold. From that hour the King delighted to honour the physician, bestowing great riches upon him and keeping him ever close to his side.

These favours awoke the jealousy of the Grand Vizier, as envious and evil-minded a man as one could find anywhere in the Kingdom. He determined to accomplish the downfall of the physician, so little by little he sowed suspicious thoughts in the mind of the Monarch. "I fear for thy life, O King," he whispered, "how knowest thou but that this stranger, who cometh from beyond the borders, be not a traitor sent to take thy life?"

These words made King Yunan uneasy; but he replied, "Nay,



thou art mistaken, for hath he not cured my malady, so wherefore should he now seek to harm me ? ”

“ O King of the Age,” said the Vizier, “ I would accuse no man unjustly, I speak only in zeal for thy welfare.”

As continual dropping will wear away a stone, so the subtle words of this evil adviser fell on the heart of the King, and at length he cried to the Vizier, “ What shall I do ? ”

Quoth the Minister, “ Summon the physician, and when he cometh into the Presence, do him to death, for ’tis better that thou shouldst slay him than he thee.”

The King sent for Douban and telling him his last hour had come, bade him make ready for the executioner who waited beside the throne.

“ O King, wherein have I sinned ? ” demanded Douban, greatly perturbed at this unexpected reception. Said the King, “ it hath come to my knowledge that thou art a traitor, so I would slay thee ere thou canst slay me.”

Douban protested and swore, by all he held sacred, to his loyalty and affection for the Sovereign, whose life he had saved ; but the King was not to be turned from his fell purpose.

“ If thou spare me, thou wilt be spared also ; but slay me and thou too shalt be slain,” threatened Douban ; “ but since thou decreest that I must die, O King, grant, at least, a reprieve to permit me to arrange my funeral and put my affairs in order.”

Douban’s request being granted, he returned to his house, strongly guarded, to make his last dispositions and take leave of his family.

When his time of grace had expired, and he was ushered into the King’s presence, he prostrated himself before the throne and then rising presented Yunan with a shabby old volume. “ O King,” said he, “ I bring thee here a gift, a book so rare that it is meet thou shouldst possess it. Guard it in thy treasury, for never canst thou have another like it.”

“ Indeed,” replied the monarch. “ What is in the book that maketh it so precious ? ”

"It containeth many secrets, and one of them is upon the third line on the sixth leaf; an thou wilt read this one as soon as my head is cut off, I shall reply to any question thou putttest to me."

Yunan was charmed to possess such a novelty, and ordered the executioner to make ready quickly, so that he might put some questions without delay.

"One word more," cried Douban, handing a packet to the King, "here I give thee a powder, spread it on a tray and place my head upon it, and the blood will cease to flow; then is the time to ask thy questions. Yet I implore thee, for thy sake as well as mine, take not away my life, I am no traitor to thee."

"Enough," said the King, "I would slay thee willingly had I no other reason than to hear thee speak after thou art dead."

The King made a sign, and with one blow the executioner struck off Douban's head; then lifting it up he placed it on the tray upon which the powder had been sprinkled. Immediately the blood stopped running and the physician opened his mouth and said, "find the page, O King!"

Yunan opened the book, and, finding the leaves stuck together, moistened his finger in his mouth to turn them the more readily. Each leaf had to be turned singly in order to find the sixth page, but at length he reached it; to his surprise it was quite blank. "O Head, there is no writing here," declared the disappointed monarch.

"Turn over a few more leaves," said the head; and the King went on turning over, always moistening his finger in his mouth, until suddenly he commenced to feel exceedingly ill. As he fell to the ground convulsed with pain, the head called out, "O King, thou meetest just retribution for returning evil for good; the book is poisoned, hadst thou spared me thou also wouldst have been spared; but I am dead and thou shalt die too." The head spoke no more, nor would King Yunan have heeded if it had done so, for he lay dead before his throne.

The story being finished, the fisherman said, "O Genie, hadst thou been willing to spare my life I would have spared thine; but



like King Yunan, thou wert ready to smite him who aided thee. Therefore back into the sea shalt thou go."

The Genie begged and implored to be set free, promising the fisherman not only safety, but riches and honours to boot. This offer greatly tempted the poor man, but he did not venture to release the captive before he had exacted from him a solemn vow, taken in the name of Allah, that his pledge would be

faithfully observed. When the leaden cover was removed, smoke issued forth, and shaped itself into the Genie, as on the previous occasion. No sooner had his feet touched the ground than he gave a mighty kick which sent the jar far out to sea. The fisherman's heart went pit-a-pat and his knees knocked together, for he was alarmed lest he might be made to follow the jar. The Genie laughed at him and cried, "Fear not, O pusillanimous One, but take thy net and follow me." The other did as he was bid, albeit he was still full of apprehension. On they went, away to the uncultivated land beyond the city, and thence across a vast plain to

a mountain tarn between four hills. "Follow me," again cried the Genie, "and cast thy net." Together they wended their way to the middle of the lake, where fish of four different colours, red, yellow, white and blue disported themselves. The net was cast there, and on being hauled in the fisherman found that it held four fish, red, yellow, white and blue, all gleaming brightly in the sunshine.

"The Sultan will pay well for these," quoth the Genie, "carry them to him, and come once on each day to fish here; then wilt thou soon be a rich man."

With a word of farewell the Genie struck his foot on the ground, which opened wide at that moment, and permitted him to disappear within the fissure. The fisherman made his way back to the city, and lost no time in taking his fish to the Palace; and the Sultan was graciously pleased to accept the gift. He commented upon the unusual colours of the fish, and their fine appearance, and ordered the Vizier to give the donor a purse of gold.

The fisherman went home rejoicing, never had he thought to possess so much money, and he intended to spend it wisely.

Meanwhile the Grand Vizier had carried the fish to the kitchen, to be cooked for the Sultan's dinner.

A new cook had just entered the royal service, and she was eager to display her skill, so she cleaned and prepared the fish with great care, and put them in the frying-pan. First she did them to a nicety on one side, basting them well with oil; and she was just about to turn them over, when the kitchen wall opened, and a gorgeously arrayed lady appeared in the aperture. She heeded not the trembling cook, but advanced to the fireplace and struck the fish with a myrtle rod, crying, "O Fish, O Fish, be ye doing as I wish?" With one accord the fish raised themselves in the pan and said, "Yes, yes, an thou keepest true, thou shalt not rue, if thou art content, we make no comment." After this the lady overturned the frying pan, and went away as she had come.



The cook was so upset at these appenings that she swooned upon the floor, and she still lay there when the Vizier came in. Shoving her with his foot he shouted, "O Woman, get up, the Sultan awaits his fish." This roused the poor creature, and she related as well as her sobs would

per mit, what had taken place, and showed the fish all burnt to a cinder.

"Keep a silent tongue in thy head O Cook," advised the Vizier, and with that he went to the Sultan and made some excuse about the fish

which satisfied the Monarch, who requested him to procure some similar ones on the morrow.

The Vizier sent for the fisherman, who undertook to supply some more the next day, and off he went to the tarn between the four mountains. He returned in due time with the four fish, and took them to the Vizier, who in turn handed them to the cook ; but this time he remained in the kitchen to watch them being fried. No sooner were the fish well-browned on the one side, and the cook about to turn them over, than the wall opened again, and everything happened just the same as it had on the day previous.

“The sooner the Sultan is informed of this, the better,” thought the Vizier, and off he went to pour his story into the royal ear, whereat the Sultan marvelled greatly, and said, “I must see this for myself, O Vizier, procure some more of the fish to-morrow.”

The fisherman arrived betimes at the Palace, with his catch, and received as his guerdon another purse of gold, so that he and his family would be enabled to spend the rest of their days in affluence.

The Sultan ordered the fish to be brought to his chamber, and commanded the Vizier to fry them in his presence. The Minister was not a skilful cook, but he succeeded in getting them fairly brown on one side, and was about to turn them, when the wall opened, and out bounced a great ugly blackamoor. He bore a green branch in his hand, and striking the fish with it, shouted, “O Fish, O Fish, be ye doing as I wish ?” The fish stood upon their little tails and replied, “Yes, yes, an thou keepest true, thou shalt not rue, if thou art content, we make no comment.” Then the blackamoor upset the frying pan, and went through the hole in the wall, which closed up immediately.

The fish were burnt as black as the negro's face, and as the Sultan inspected them ruefully, he said, “Verily to this riddle we must find a key.”

He sent for the fisherman, and was astonished to learn of the existence of four mountains, and a lake, which were quite unknown to any one in court or city, in spite of their being within an hour's march of the town.

The Sultan lost no time in setting out to view this unknown spot. With the fisherman as guide, the nobles and guards followed the monarch, till they reached the mountain tarn wherein the fish, red, yellow, white and blue, disported themselves.

When all had expressed their wonderment at the sight, the Sultan gave orders that his retinue should encamp on the shores of the lake, and he then retired to his tent.

At nightfall he held counsel with his Vizier, for he disliked the business of the talking fish, the lady and the blackamoor, and the sudden appearance of mountains and lake, where none had ever been before.

"To-night," said the Sultan, "I go forth alone, to seek the key of this riddle; stay thou here, O Vizier, and say that I am indisposed and will see no one, neither emirs, ministers, nabobs, chamberlains nor courtiers, and let none guess at my absence."

The Vizier endeavoured to dissuade the Sultan from carrying out his hazardous design; but he was deaf to all argument and left the camp secretly and alone, under cover of darkness.

He walked on for many leagues, and at length came to a solitary palace standing in the midst of a plain.

The great doors stood ajar, and as there came no response to his repeated knocking, the Sultan made bold to enter uninvited. He passed through the great hall, crying, "Hallo there," as loudly as he could; but none answered. From room to room he went, lost in admiration of the splendid furniture, hangings and carpets which filled them; each one more magnificent than the last.

Choice flowers bloomed in the gardens, and rare birds flew amongst the trees which were covered with golden nets, so that the songsters could not escape.

In the great hall stood a fountain with a golden lion at each corner, and from their mouths ran a constant stream of water which seemed to break into diamonds and pearls as it fell. Above was a great striped canopy of crimson and gold, and the fringe that fell therefrom was made of strings of precious stones.

The Sultan viewed these splendours with delight, and then

being weary, sat down to rest. Presently he became aware of a melancholy wailing, which seemed to proceed from the side of the building that he had not yet visited. He at once advanced in the direction of the sound, and found himself before a door concealed by heavy silken hangings. He drew these aside and entered a room, the centre of which was occupied by a handsome young man seated on a dais. He was clad in silken garments, and bore a crown of pearls upon his head; but the expression of his countenance betokened extreme sorrow.

The Sultan advanced and saluted the seated figure, his greeting was returned courteously, and the young man said, "O Stranger, pardon that I rise not to receive thee, in the manner that befits thy apparent rank and station."

"Whatever be thy reason, thou art excused, O Youth," returned the Sultan, "I have intruded here, seeking to solve the riddle of the four mountains and the lake with its fishes, red, yellow, white and blue. I also would fain know how thy palace came here in this desert spot, and why I see thee all alone and unhappy."





The young man made no reply to this ; but burst into a flood of tears, and raising his silken robe, disclosed to the wondering eyes of the Sultan, that his lower half was a block of stone.

The Monarch, greatly concerned to see so sad a sight, entreated the young man to acquaint him with the cause of his affliction ; whereupon the latter narrated the following.

TALE OF THE ENCHANTED PRINCE.

‘ Know, O Stranger, that the four mountains and the lake, whereof thou hast made mention, were at one time the Capital of the kingdom of the Black Islands, and my father Mahmoud was the king. When his earthly course was run, I wedded my cousin and reigned in his stead. For five years I dwelt in peace and amity with my consort ; but after that time I marked in her demeanour a growing coldness and lack of affection for me. One day as I lay upon a couch, I called two female slaves to sit beside

me, with their fans, to ward off the flies and temper the heat of the day. Thinking I slumbered, they presently began to whisper to one another, and from their conversation, I learnt, to my horror, that the Queen, my consort, was commonly known to be a sorceress.

Upon my reproaching my wife for being in league with the Evil One, she turned upon me in a fury of anger, and uttering a magic spell, cried, "O perfidious One, I command thee to become half stone." Nor hath she been content with this cruel revenge upon one who had never done her ill; but she must needs bewitch my beautiful Capital, turning the city into the barren mountains, and the lake thou wottest of, and transforming its multitude of people into fish.

The white fish were the Moslems, the red, Persians, the blue, Christians, and the yellow, Jews, each according with the colours of the turbans by which the different sects were distinguished.

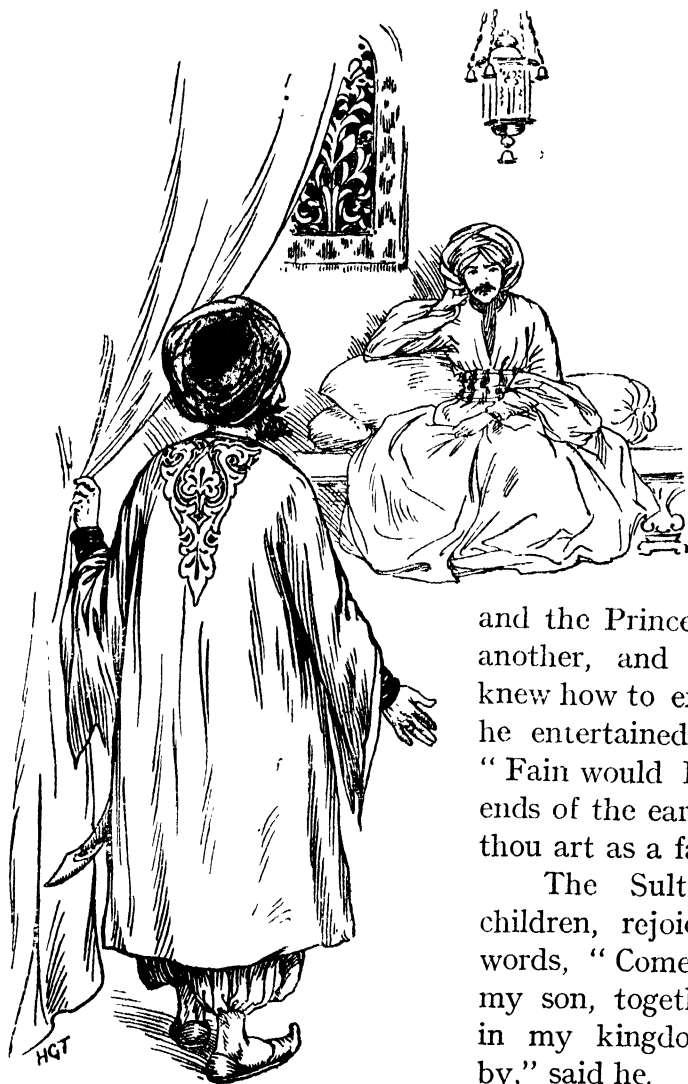
Every day the sorceress returneth here and wreaketh her spite by lashing me with a whip, until the blood cometh down my shoulders; and so my sorrow passeth all endurance."

Quoth the Sultan, upon hearing this sorrowful tale, "O Prince, be of good courage, for never will I leave thee, till I have found a means to liberate thee from the toils of this witch."

After long discussing of this and that, the Sultan decided to conceal himself in the chamber and await the coming of the sorceress. Presently the woman entered and commenced to belabour her husband, who, being unable to move, had to endure this treatment as best he could.

The Sultan sprang forth from his hiding place with drawn scimitar, and by a counter-spell known to him, forced the witch to pronounce a charm over a vessel of water, which forthwith undid all her wicked enchantments.

Immediately the words were spoken the Prince resumed his natural form, and was able to rise from the dais where he had so long been seated. At the same time the mountains and lake,



once more, became a great and populous city, with its former denizens decked in their gaily coloured turbans.

Fearing that the sorceress meditated some further wickedness, the Sultan, with one stroke of his scimitar, cut her in twain.

The Monarch and the Prince now embraced one another, and the latter scarce knew how to express the gratitude he entertained for his deliverer, "Fain would I follow thee to the ends of the earth," he cried, "for thou art as a father to me."

The Sultan, who had no children, rejoiced to hear these words, "Come with me and be my son, together we shall dwell in my kingdom which is hard by," said he.

The Prince gazed at him in wonder, "O King of kings," he rejoined, "thy kingdom is a whole year's march from here, it only appeared so near because of the enchantment. But, even so, I am prepared to go with thee and be thy son, to comfort and solace thee in thine old age."

Hasty preparations were made for the departure, and the

Prince calling his ministers together, left the kingdom in their charge. In ten days the Sultan and the Prince, escorted by a great train of slaves, started on their journey. The rear of the great procession was brought up by camels laden with gold and silver, and the slaves scattered largess amongst the people as they passed through the towns and villages.

For a full year did they travel thus, and then the Sultan's Capital came in sight. The good Monarch was greeted with enthusiasm by his loyal subjects,

who came out in crowds to meet him and give him hearty welcome.

The Prince, having no desire to return to his own Capital



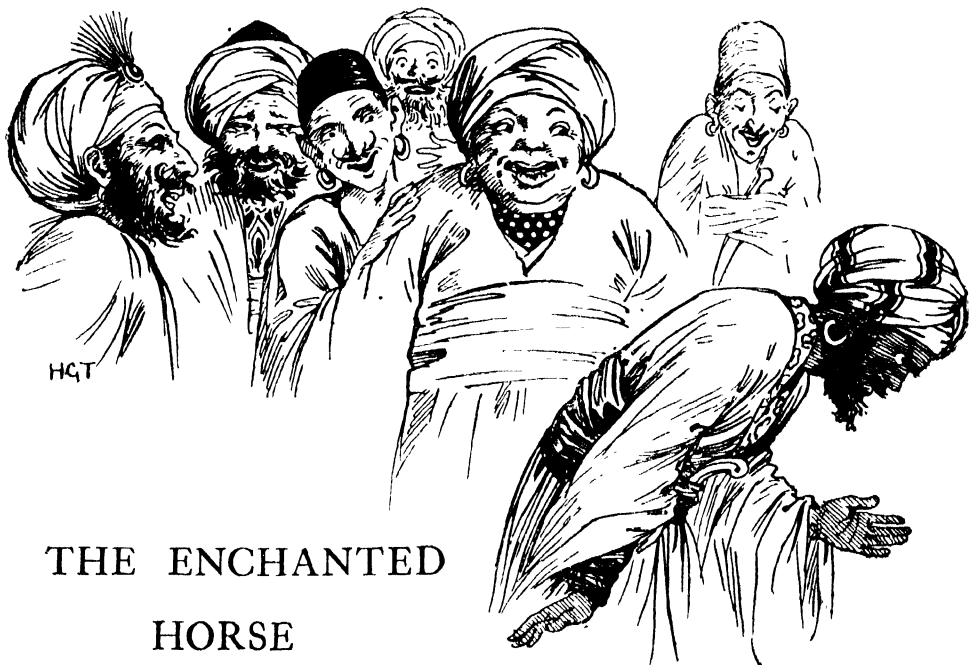
where he had suffered so greatly, remained with the Sultan who adopted him as son and heir.

The Sultan forgot not the fisherman, and summoned him to the Palace in order to requite his services.

Learning that the fisherman was ambitious for his daughters and son, and desired nothing for himself, the Monarch promoted these young people to high positions at Court. So worthily did they behave, and so assiduous were they in the duties that were entrusted to them, that soon the children of the poor fisherman were esteemed by all who knew them.

One happy day the Sultan himself espoused the elder daughter, and the younger one he gave to the Prince to wife. So the fisherman became not only a man of wealth, but also the grandfather of many little princes and princesses; and he lived in joy and contentment for the remainder of his life.





THE ENCHANTED HORSE

ONCE in the bygone ages, Persia was governed by a mighty and powerful king, Sabur by name, who was not only wealthy, but wise as well.

He had three handsome daughters ; but his son Prince Feroze-Shah was the pride and joy of his heart. Now it was a custom of that country to celebrate two solemn festivals during the year ; that of Mùhrgan (the Autumnal sun-fête, our Michaelmas), and Nau-roz or New Year which fell on the first day of spring.

On these occasions, which were observed by religious ceremonies as well as rejoicings, King Sabur held public audience at his Court at Shiraz. There were great displays and many entertainments, and citizens or strangers who had any ingenious novelty to show would take this opportunity to bring them before the King's notice. The Monarch took great interest in such matters, and was renowned for the liberality with which he rewarded those whose inventions pleased him.



On one Nau-roz—
never to be forgotten!—
a Hindoo presented himself at the Palace, and upon the guards making way for him to enter, prostrated himself before the King, and, wishing him joy of the festival, displayed a most splendid model of a horse carved in ebony and ivory, richly caparisoned and ready harnessed. It stood there so naturally that one could take it to be alive. Quoth the King, "'tis a marvellous fine horse; but what use hath it?" To which the Hindoo replied, "O King of Kings, it is indeed a most

marvellous horse, for it taketh its rider wheresoever he desireth to go. It riseth in the air like a bird and goeth a greater distance in a day than can ordinarily be compassed in a year."

The King and all his courtiers wondered greatly, for never before had they heard of nor seen anything like it; and His Majesty requested the Hindoo to show them the strange feats whereof he boasted.

Immediately the Hindoo mounted and asked the King where he desired him to go.

"Seest thou yon mountains," said King Sabur, pointing to an eminence some three leagues distant, "Go thou there and return again with thy magic steed; and bring me a branch from a palm-tree that groweth at the base."

"To hear is to obey," responded the Hindoo, turning a peg on the right side of the horse's neck, and rising up in the air, like a streak of light, he was soon lost to sight. In a quarter of an hour he was back again bearing a branch from the palm that grew at the base of the mountain. The King, delighted with what he had witnessed, was now very desirous of possessing the horse, and to this end inquired of its owner what price he demanded for his masterpiece.

"O auspicious King," said the Hindoo, "as thou seest, my horse is a wonder of wonders, and of such great value that there is but one thing in all thy Kingdom, that I would take in exchange for it."

"Name but this thing thou desirest, it shall be thine," cried the Monarch.

Quoth the Hindoo, "An it find favour in thy sight, thy youngest daughter would I have in marriage; she alone, of all thy great possessions, O King, do I hold of equal value to that treasure of treasures, the Ebony Horse." At this request the courtiers could nor refrain from laughing aloud, for the Hindoo was nigh upon a hundred years old, and of exceeding ugliness; and the Princess was beautiful as the moon, and graceful as the gazelle. Never-the-less the Monarch hesitated how to act, being swayed one way by affection for his daughter, the other by desire for the horse.

Prince Feroze-Shah, who observed his sire's dilemma, stepped forward and pleaded with him not to contemplate the sacrifice of both his dignity and his daughter to this insolent wizard, this impertinent fellow.

The Hindoo was greatly mortified at the Prince's words, and vowed, under his breath, to take vengeance on him; but he said nothing and bided his time.

"Thou art right, O my Son," replied the King, "I will by no means consider his proposal; but ere some other offer be made to him, do thou test this horse thyself and see how it goeth."

The Prince, nothing loth, mounted, and placing his feet in the stirrups, requested the Hindoo to show him how to manage and guide the steed. The latter, seeing his opportunity to punish the



young man, who had angered him, cried, "turn the peg on the right side of the neck, so wilt thou ascend." The Prince did as he was bid, and the horse rose like a flash, with its rider, to soar up, higher and ever higher until both disappeared from view. The moments passed, and as Feroze-Shah did not come

back his father became troubled and commanded the Hindoo to make the horse descend forthwith.

"O King of the Ages," said the old man, "that can I not do. Verily, I greatly fear that thou wilt see thy son nevermore. As thou sawest, 'twas no fault of mine that the Prince in his haste to be gone, asked not how to descend, and I alack! forgot to tell him."

When the King heard these words his grief and rage were terrible to witness, and he bade his slaves bastinado the Hindoo and

cast him into prison, where he should remain until such time as Feroze-Shah returned home, safe and sound.

Throughout the land of Persia there was mourning and weeping for the Prince who came not back.

The Enchanted Horse had meanwhile been rising and rising as it progressed in its flight, and as it seemed to be drawing nearer to the sun, Feroze-Shah commenced to consider the advisability of descending to earth again. He turned the peg in a reverse direction, but though it moved readily, he found himself going higher still, at a swifter pace.

"Now am I foredoomed," thought the Prince, "None but Allah, the All-Merciful, can save me," and he uttered an earnest prayer for help. Then, being a man of intelligence, it crossed his mind that if one peg made the horse ascend, another one might be there for the reverse purpose. He carefully examined the animal's neck and was rewarded by finding a small peg on the left side, which upon being turned, caused the horse to slacken pace and commence to descend very slowly towards the earth.

The sun was setting as down they went, then the darkness of night came on, but still down, down flew the horse, until at length, it alighted, like a weary bird, upon the terrace of a castle.

The Prince dismounted, tired and famished, for he had had neither bite nor sup since early morning, and groped his way along the terrace, hoping to meet with someone who would provide him with food and shelter.

Near the end of the terrace he came upon a staircase; so leaving the horse, he tip-toed softly down, for he knew not whether friend or foe awaited him below. The staircase led to an apartment, and by the snores which resounded through the open door Feroze-Shah surmised that its occupants must be asleep. He entered and found himself within the guard-room of the women's quarters. Numbers of slaves lay fast asleep, their drawn sabres beside them, and the Prince passed by without disturbing them. Beyond a curtained doorway, he observed the glimmer of lights, and impelled by curiosity withdrew the hanging. For a moment he remained rooted to the

threshold, for the sight that met his gaze aroused his wonder and admiration. In the middle of a splendidly furnished apartment stood a raised couch upon which slumbered the most beautiful damsel he had ever beheld. She was surrounded by slaves, all fast asleep, and seeing this Feroze-Shah ventured to approach the dais.

Falling upon his knees beside the couch, he looked and looked until forgetting everything else, but the admiration the lady inspired in his heart, he leant forward and gently kissed her hair. She awakened immediately, and, seeing a stranger beside her couch, sat up in affright, demanding "who art thou and how camest thou here?"

"O Lady," quoth he, "I beg thee pardon my intrusion which was all unwitting; I entered thy chamber, the Prince of Persia, but I shall quit it nothing more than thy slave. Know that I have been brought from my father's Kingdom by means of magic and sorcery and now do crave thy kindness and protection." Whereupon the lady replied, "O Prince, this is not the land of the barbarian; but the Palace of my father the Rajah of Bengal, and in his absence, I do bid thee welcome." She aroused her slaves and bade them conduct him to an apartment where he could rest after they had regaled him with a fine repast.

All that night the Princess of Bengal lay awake thinking of the handsome stranger whose gentle voice and courtly manners had quite won her heart. At daybreak she summoned her slaves, and bade them tire her in her most becoming garments and finest jewels, and was not satisfied until her mirror assured her that never before had she appeared more charming.

When her toilet was complete she sent word to Feroze-Shah that she was about to visit him; and the Prince, delighted by the honour conferred upon him, awaited her coming with impatience.

As she entered the room he salaamed low and greeted her with deepest respect. When he had led her to a couch, the Princess requested him to relate his adventures to her, and inform her by what means he had gained access to the palace, which stood in a lonely part of the country.

Very willingly did he tell her the story of the Ebony Horse and she listened to it with astonishment and interest. When he had told his tale he rose to take leave of her with many expressions of thanks and gratitude ; adding " No longer may I tarry here, for it behoveth me to return to mine own country and allay the anxiety of my parents and sisters." " Nay, O my Lord," responded the Princess, " remain awhile with me and learn the ways and customs of Bengal, so canst thou better relate what thou hast seen, when thou hast returned to thine own land." The Prince feeling that he could not gainsay so polite a request, acquiesced the more willingly in that he was eager to stay with his beautiful hostess, whose charms had already won his heart. For two happy months the hours sped by, and found the Prince still loitering with the lady from whom he scarce could tear himself away.

Each day brought some new pleasure, feasts, picnics, concerts or hunting parties in the fine woods that adjoined the palace. But best of all they loved to dally after a dainty repast, listening to the sweet music of the stringed instruments and singing maidens ; or to sit upon soft carpets in a shady nook conversing together of many pleasant things.

At last the Prince dared no longer delay his departure, but both of them admitting they could not live a day apart, Feroze-Shah begged the Princess to return with him to his father's Kingdom ; " O Light of the Universe," he said, " my heart beats for thee alone, thy slave and lover am I."

The Princess after some demur consented to accompany her beloved one, and he promised to ease her mind, after their nuptials had been celebrated at his father's court, by sending an ambassador to her sire, the Rajah, then absent on a journey, with all due apologies and explanations. So the matter was arranged and ere sunrise, whilst all in the Palace were lost in slumber, the twain ascended to the terrace, and mounting the Enchanted Horse directed its course to Persia. On they sped, until the domes and minarets of Shiraz came into view, and they then descended to alight at the Summer Palace, which was situate some little distance from the city :

Leaving the horse at the door, Feroze-Shah begged the lady to rest within, whilst he returned to acquaint his father of his arrival and beg him to receive her in the manner befitting her high rank. He would then return and they would enter the city together, with all pomp and ceremony. Taking his leave, he hastened to his father, who received him with joy and ecstasy, for he had long mourned his son as dead.

When Feroze-Shah had told his tale, King Sabur straightway set about arranging for the reception of the Princess of Bengal. He commanded the city to be decorated and, taking horse, set out with his son and an escort of courtiers, soldiers, guards and citizens, to bring the lady home. A magnificent litter had been hastily prepared for the Princess, and Feroze-Shah was arrayed in his finest, so that he looked beautiful as the morning sun.

The King, being a man of his word, forgot not the Hindoo, and whilst the preparations were in progress, ordered him to be brought into the presence, and giving him his freedom, dismissed him with a munificent gift.

But the Hindoo felt sore in regard to the treatment that had been meted out to him, and sought for a way whereby to revenge himself on both the King and Feroze-Shah. By means of diligent enquiry he learnt all that had transpired during his imprisonment and saw for himself the preparations that were afoot to receive the Princess.

He hied away to the Summer Palace as fast as his old legs would carry him, and found to his satisfaction that he had outstripped the procession, which was even then on the way to welcome the Princess.

The Princess was easily persuaded by the Hindoo, that he was a trusty messenger sent by the Prince to convey her to the great square before the Palace where the Royal Family had assembled to do her honour. He respectfully requested her to mount the Ebony Horse, and then jumped up in front, at the same moment turning the peg of ascent; and away they went up into the air. They sped along and passed the King, Feroze-Shah, and all their cortège; but

so high up as to be beyond their reach. Although they could hear the cries of the Princess, who, by this time, realized that she had been perfidiously stolen from her friends, they had no means of rescuing her.

The Prince was broken-hearted when he saw his beloved one carried away. He took a hurried farewell of his father and set out to search for his Lady, determining to find



her, even though the Hindoo carried her to the ends of the earth.

Meanwhile the Enchanted Horse flew on and on, until it alighted in a meadow in a far country, the Land of the Greeks. This meadow was nigh to a city which was governed by a King of might

and power; and it chanced that he had that very day sallied forth to the chase, and passed close by the spot where the Princess of Bengal was rending the air by cries for help.

The Monarch and his retainers hastened to see what was amiss, and found, to their amazement, a beautiful damsel struggling to escape from an ill-favoured Hindoo, who held her fast.

Quoth the King, "O my Lady, what ails thee, and who is this old man who holdeth thee?"

"Before the Princess could reply, the Hindoo broke in, declaring, "O my Lord, the woman is my wife, the daughter of my father's brother.' But she cried aloud, "Save me from this man, no wife or kin of his am I, he hath stolen me treacherously and



brought me hither on an enchanted horse." Her beauty and her tears persuaded the King of the truth of her story, so he ordered the Hindoo to be seized and his head cut off, which his slaves did without further parley.

The Princess was conducted to the Palace and had a sumptuous lodging assigned to her there; and the horse was placed in the Royal Treasury, for none knew the secret of its motion. The Princess related to the King the events that led to her arrival in his dominion and fondly hoped he would send her back speedily either to Bengal or Persia, as it behoved a courteous prince to act. What was her dismay when he declared that he had no intention so to do; but designed to marry her that very day. She was so perturbed at this unexpected announcement that she fell into a deep swoon. When she regained consciousness she resolved to feign madness, so as to avoid this distasteful marriage, and in a fine frenzy tore her clothes to tatters and writhed upon the floor.

The Monarch was completely deceived, and finding he could by no means calm her, left her to the care of her slaves. As the malady appeared to increase, the King summoned his Court Physicians and bade them attend her.

They endeavoured to approach her to feel her pulse, but her fury was so well-dissembled that they feared to go near her, and satisfied themselves by ordering some innocuous drug. One by one all the celebrated physicians of the Kingdom were called in, always with the same result, until the King was reduced to despair, for he greatly desired to marry the Princess.

All this time Feroze-Shah wandered from country to country in quest of the Princess, until after a weary while he came to the Land of the Greeks. Here there was much talk about the sick lady, for the King had sent out a proclamation that he would richly reward whosoever could cure her.

As Feroze-Shah rested at a Khan, a party of merchants commenced to chat about the matter, and at his request related how the lady had been rescued by the King from an evil-looking Hindoo. They also made mention of a wooden horse, belonging to the same

Hindoo, which was a very miracle of naturalness, and was now to be seen in the Royal Treasury-house. The Prince rejoiced to hear these tidings, having no doubt that at last he had found his liege lady.

He forthwith disguised himself in the garb of a doctor and repaired to the Capital, where he sought audience of the King, professing to be an adept in the cure of madness. The King at once led him to a window through which he could watch the patient, being himself concealed.

Having assured himself that it was the Princess, he begged the King to permit him to enter the apartment alone, so that he might commence the treatment without delay. Receiving the required permission he entered stealthily and bending over her, as she sat singing a pathetic love-song, whispered softly in her ear "O delight of my eyes, 'tis I, thy faithful Feroze-Shah." ✓

The Princess was transported with delight when she recognized the Prince, and they greeted one another fondly, albeit with discretion for fear of prying eyes.

They took hasty counsel together and agreed that in order to facilitate her escape, the Princess should show that her malady was abated, and meanwhile Feroze-Shah would endeavour to arrange some means whereby this could be effected.

The next day the King paid a visit to the poor, mad lady, and his delight knew no bounds, when he found her calm and gracious, bearing no trace of her indisposition.

He sent for Feroze-Shah to express his gratitude and offered him a rich reward; but the Prince refused to accept either the one or the other, saying, "O King, though by good fortune I have discovered the cause of the disease, the cure is by no means complete. As her brain hath been turned by enchantment, whereof the horse of ebony is the agent, so can she not be wholly restored until the beast is exorcised." "O illustrious Physician," replied the King, "lieth it within thy power to do this thing?"

"Yea," said the Prince, "an thou wilt permit the lady and the horse to be conveyed to the spot where thou sawest them first,

and let thy slaves place braziers of lighted charcoal around them. Then will I burn a certain incense, the secret properties of which are known to me ; and thou, thy courtiers and subjects may see the most astonishing sight ever beheld. But I warn thee, O auspicious King, let none approach the magic circle within the braziers, remain all of ye on the farthest confines of the meadow." The King readily acceded to so reasonable a request, and looked eagerly forward to the time when the Princess would be sufficiently restored for the wedding festivities to commence. The Ebony Horse was brought to the meadow, and the King rode thither, with all his nobles and troops, quite unsuspecting of the Prince's purpose.

When they came to the appointed place, the Princess and the horse were set some distance from the King and his company, and surrounded by braziers of burning charcoal.

Quoth the counterfeit physician, "Now will I proceed to exorcise the devil that investeth this horse. It behoveth me to mount the horse and take the lady behind me. Then shalt thou witness a marvel, O King, for the beast will rise into the air and fare towards thee ; and when thou hast lifted the lady from the horse, thou wilt find her madness gone from her for ever."

The Prince entered within the circle of braziers and paced around with footsteps solemn and slow, eyes downcast and hands crossed upon his breast. Presently he mounted the horse and assisted the Princess



to a seat behind him, whereupon he turned the peg of ascent, and upwards soared the horse. Whilst still within earshot of the multitude, Feroze-Shah shouted, "O King, in future seek not to wed princesses before thou hast gained their consent ;" and away they went up into the empyrean blue. Thus was the Princess delivered by her own true love and carried back to Persia by the Enchanted Horse.

When the King of Greece perceived that he had been tricked, he was seized with such a fit of fury that it well-nigh cost him his life. His ministers soothed him and calmed his ire, saying, "Truly thou art well rid of the crazy damsel and the physician who was naught but a wicked sorcerer." The Enchanted Horse stayed not

until it alighted in the Square before the Palace of Shiraz. The King, hearing the acclamations of the populace, rushed to the spot and rejoiced greatly to behold his son and the Princess of Bengal.

After tenderly embracing them both, he led them to the Queen, who gave them a loving welcome. As soon as the consent and approval of the Rajah of Bengal had been obtained, the nuptials of Feroze-Shah and his lady were celebrated with a magnificence that has never been surpassed, before or since, in all the land of Persia. The citizens feasted and made merry for a whole month, and peace and goodwill reigned in all the Land.



CODADAD AND HIS BROTHERS

IN the city of Harran, there was once a Sultan, who was not only rich, but virtuous and just.

He had fifty sons, whom, he fondly hoped, would one day succeed him as joint heirs to the throne; and he took great delight in all of them, save one, called Codadad (God's Gift).

When Codadad was still an infant, his mother, the Princess Firuzah, inadvertently displeased the Sultan, and was banished from the country.

She took her baby with her and sought refuge at the court of Samir, King of Samaria, where she lived happily for many years.

Samir loved little Codadad, who grew strong and handsome and valiant, and had him educated in a manner befitting a prince of such high lineage.

So the boy came to the dawn of manhood, when his high spirits and daring nature made him restless, and he yearned to go forth into the world in quest of adventure.

At this time the Sultan of Harran was much harassed by



foes who invaded his kingdom from all directions ; and Codadad greatly desired to aid his father in ridding himself of these uninvited guests.

He begged his mother and King Samir to give him leave to go to Harran ; but they would by no means be persuaded, saying, " had thy father desired thy help, he would have sent for thee."

But Codadad was bent on winning his sire's esteem, and knew no peace until Firuzah gave him permission to ride away secretly, knowing that Samir would thwart his design.

He came at last to Harran-city, and, on a day when the Sultan gave audience to the townsfolk, made his obeisance before his father, and requested of him a position where he could win honour and glory.

He did not disclose his parentage nor whence he came, but the Sultan regarded the handsome and courtly youth with favour and gave him a command in the army.

Codadad's strength, skill, and prowess, were such that he speedily rose to be Chief Commandant of the Forces, and he soon rid the country of all the invaders ; for none could stand against his well-drilled troops.

Everyone, from the Sultan to the meanest slave of the harem, loved and honoured the brave and chivalrous youth, and the heart of the Monarch went out to the stranger who had served him so loyally. As a mark of his esteem, he placed the guardianship of the forty-and-nine princes in Codadad's hands, which pleased everybody save the princes themselves. They became daily more angry and jealous of the Sultan's favourite, until they grew to hate him with a bitter hatred.

" Let us lure him to a lonely spot and kill him," suggested one of the princes to his brothers.

" Not so," objected another, " we might be found out ; rather let us bring the fellow into disgrace, so that he is expelled the country."

This plan pleased them vastly, and they put their heads

together to devise a means of carrying out their design. This they soon settled, by arranging to lose themselves whilst under Codadad's care. Accordingly they went to Codadad, and craved permission to go a-hunting, and, this being granted, rode off hot-foot. Away they went over the borders of the kingdom, intending to hide in a distant city where none would find them.

Three days passed, and as the princes did not return from the chase the Sultan, becoming anxious, sent in all directions in search of them. But whither-so-ever they had gone or what had befallen them no one could discover.

The Sultan, torn with grief, turned against his whilom favourite, and upbraided him for neglecting to care for his charges, and betraying the trust he had reposed in him.

"Go," said he, "and search for them and bring them safely back, else thou payest thy negligence with thy life." Codadad needed no second bidding ; but though he rode far and wide he found no trace of the missing princes.

For many days he wandered thus, until he came to a great prairie in the centre of which

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uprose a large palace. As he rode slowly past this edifice he observed a beautiful lady at one of the windows ; she appeared to be distraught, for her robe was torn, her hair dishevelled, and great tears rolled down her pale cheeks.

When she saw Codadad she called to him, " O Youth, tarry not here, for this is the dwelling place of a man-eating monster who preyeth on all who come within his reach."

But Codadad knew not fear, " O my lady," he said, " is there any service I can do for thee, thou seemest in great affliction."

" Alack !" replied the lady, " I must die to-night. 'Twas but yester-eve the monster caught me, and he hath sworn to take my life an I consent not to be his bride before the sun goes down, and that will I do never. I beg thee, gallant Youth, make thy escape, without delay. I wot not when the wretch returneth."

Even as she spoke, the monster appeared, mounted on a Tartar steed. He was a negro of gigantic stature, hideous to behold ; and as he rode along he brandished a sword so long and heavy that only such as he could wield it.

Codadad muttered a fervent prayer to Allah to protect him from this fiend, and unsheathed his scimitar, awaiting the onslaught calmly.

The giant laughed at the sight of the defiant stripling, and put out his hand to pick him up ; but the latter with great address dealt him so doughty a blow, on the knee, that the monster yelled with pain. Roused to a fury he raised himself in his stirrups and struck fiercely at his opponent with his great sword. The prince dexterously avoided the blow, and struck the giant on the right arm with such force that the hand was severed and fell to the ground still grasping the sword.

Screaming with agony, the monster rolled from his horse, and ere he could raise himself again, Codadad dismounted, and in a twinkling cut the ugly head from the writhing body.

The lady who had been watching from the casement, and supplicating Heaven at the same time, now cried joyfully that

the keys of the castle were in the giant's pocket, and she begged Codadad to release her with all speed.

He found the keys and in a trice the great gate was swung open, creaking on its hinges, and the captive came hastily out to meet him, and would have cast herself at his feet; but he raised her gallantly with a respectful salaam, and led her to within the palace.

"Whence comest thou, fair lady, and what is thy name?" he enquired, seating himself beside her. "I am a princess of Grand

Cairo, and was journeying to Bagdad, even as I fell into the monster's clutches," she told him, and was about to relate her history when their discourse was interrupted by the sound of shrieks and moans and groans.

"O lady," cried Codadad, "knowest thou whence come these lamentations?"

"Methinks," said she, "those be the cries of the poor creatures that the monster hath caught and imprisoned in the dungeon beneath the castle. Each day he would choose one of these unfortunates and roast him for his supper, so when the dusk comes, they fear greatly."



"Come, let us liberate them without delay," suggested he, and they proceeded at once towards the dungeon. After unlocking the outer door they descended to a deep and darksome vault, where over a hundred prisoners were chained to stakes.

The groans became louder as they approached, for in the darkness the captives thought it was the giant coming to select his evening meal.

Their deliverer hastened to reassure them. "Fear not," said he, "I have come to set you free," upon which the plaints were changed to words of thankfulness. As soon as the fetters were removed, Codadad conducted the prisoners to the courtyard. When the daylight fell upon them, nothing could exceed his joy and wonderment, for amongst the captives were his brothers, for whom he had searched as a shepherd seeks his straying flock.

He gave thanks to Heaven, and counted them over to see that none was missing, and one and all of the forty-and-nine of them fell upon his neck, overwhelming him with praise and gratitude.

There were horses and camels in plenty in the stables, and the castle was filled with plunder, that the giant had filched from caravans and travellers, so Codadad gave each man his share, and all were soon ready to go their devious ways.

When all had departed save the lady and the princes, the latter hastily prepared a meal, and as they sat at table, Codadad begged the lady to acquaint them with her story; whereupon she related the following :—

THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCESS OF DERYABAR

"My father was King of Deryabar in the land of Egypt, and I, being his only 'child and heiress, was ever the object of his tenderest solicitude.

When I became old enough to marry, my sire arranged that a young prince, whom he had adopted out of charity, should be my consort. The good king loved and trusted this youth as his own son; but the base ingrate headed an insurrection, murdered my father and proclaimed himself King of Deryabar.

The assassin thought to force me into fulfilling the marriage contract which was not yet completed ; but the foresight of the Grand Vizier saved me from this terrible fate. He concealed me in the house of a friend until a vessel was hastily fitted out, wherein we embarked and sailed away to seek refuge in a distant country.

We had been but a few days at sea, when a terrific storm arose, wrecking our vessel, which broke to pieces, leaving us to the mercy of the cruel sea. Everyone on board was drowned, I alone being spared to endure further misfortunes. Clinging to a plank, the waves buffeted me hither and thither, until the incoming tide left me stranded on a beach.

When I regained consciousness, I became aware of a youth of noble mien, bending over me. He wore a crown of gold upon his head, and was escorted by a cavalcade of gaily accoutred soldiers.

When he had somewhat restored me, he asked how I came in such a plight on that lonely shore ; and I unfolded to him my woeful adventures. Tenderly comforting me, he bade me return with him to the kingdom, whereof he was ruler, and abide there with his mother.

The good lady received me with love and kindness, and I dwelt in her palace for many months. The King came to regard me with affection, and having persuaded me to become his wife, the nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence.

But my evil fate still pursued me, and on the very night of our marriage festivities, a neighbouring monarch made a sudden raid, and our army, being unprepared, was cut to pieces.

Under cover of the darkness my husband escaped with me, and finding a fisherman's boat on the shore, we put out to sea, letting the waves carry us whither they list.

On the third day we were overtaken by a pirate vessel, the crew of which, being armed, soon overpowered us, and we were bound hand and foot and conveyed on board their boat.

The pirates tore off my veil, and my features being pleasing

to them, each one desired to claim me as his property. The dispute waxed furious, words soon turned to blows, and they fought like maniacs until all were killed but one.

This pirate, who was a burly brute, looked at me and said, 'Thou shalt go to Cairo with me, my pretty one, where I will give thee to my friend who desires a beautiful slave.' Then noting my husband, he exclaimed, 'I have no use for this dog,' and he took up the unhappy king and cast him into the sea.

I would fain have followed my husband; but the pirate held me back, and at last, wearying of my cries and struggles, lashed me to the mast.

He hoisted sail and reached the coast, where, procuring camels and slaves, he set out with me on the journey to Cairo. After we had travelled some distance, we were set upon by the giant who dwelt in this castle, and soon the pirate and all his slaves lay dead upon the ground.

I alone was spared and brought to the castle, and I wot not what my end had been, but for thy valour, O gracious Prince."

When the Princess of Deryabar had said her say, Codadad, being greatly moved by her beauty and sad fortunes, entreated her to have no fear for the future.

Quoth he, "an thou canst bring thyself to take me for thy spouse I will love thee truly for all time."

The lady was thankful to give herself into the safe keeping of so brave and virtuous a man, and consented to the marriage taking place there and then.

The forty-and-nine princes were witnesses to the contract, and were loud in their expressions of good-will. At day-dawn they all set out together on the return journey to Harran.

As they travelled along in peace and amity, Codadad felt that the hour had come when he might confess the secret he had so long concealed.

"Know ye," said he, "I am your brother, son of Firuzah, who fled to Samaria, and I love ye with a brother's love."

On hearing this the princes feigned great delight; but the

black hearts of them were secretly filled with anger. In the stilly watches of the night they whispered to one another, "when our sire heareth that Codadad is his son, and that he hath vanquished the giant, that we, in our numbers, could not conquer, he will love him more even than heretofore. Haply he will appoint him sole heir, and we shall have to bend beneath his yoke."

They rose up full of rage, and crept stealthily into the tent where Codadad and his spouse lay sleeping. Without a sound they fell upon their new-found brother, and stabbing him in every limb, left him for dead beside the slumbering Princess.

They then proceeded to Harran, and the Sultan was overjoyed to see his errant sons again, readily forgiving them the alarm they had caused him, when they said a hunting accident, to one of the brothers, had detained them. Never a word said they of Codadad or aught that had befallen them.

The Princess, on



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awakening, lamented sore to find her consort bleeding from every limb and well-nigh dead. She hastened forth to a town in the vicinity of their halting-place to seek a surgeon, with whom she returned at once, to succour the wounded man.

The tent stood as the Princess had left it ; but her husband was there no longer ; though they searched right and left he was not to be found. The Princess, thinking that some wild beast had dragged him away, beat her breast and tore her hair and wept aloud. The surgeon, filled with compassion at the sight of such heart-felt sorrow, as soon as he had heard her pitiful story, offered to escort her to Harran.

They hired two dromedaries, and went upon their way, for the lady was determined to expose to the Sultan the wicked deed of the forty-and-nine princes, and avenge her husband's death. Arrived at Harran-city, they alighted at a caravansary to rest. The host, after the manner of his kind, entertained them with the gossip of the town and court.

" Know ye," quoth he, " that the Sultan hath lost his son, one Codadad, who dwelt here many years a stranger ? A right noble and valiant prince is he ; but he hath gone forth and none knoweth whither. His mother, the Lady Firuzah, hath come from Samaria, where she was long time in exile, to seek news of him and mingleth her tears with those of the Sultan, for they apprehend that some calamity hath betide their son." Thus their host discoursed, and of other matters besides, until the surgeon rose to go on his way to seek audience of the Princess Firuzah. He had deemed it best for the Princess of Deryabar to remain concealed in the caravansary meanwhile ; for he feared the malignity of the forty-and-nine wicked brothers if they discovered her in the city.

The surgeon readily gained admittance to the Lady Firuzah, and the poor mother listened heart-broken, whilst he recounted that which the Princess of Deryabar had related to him. The Sultan hearing the weeping and wailing of Firuzah and her slaves, hurried to the apartment whence came these lamentations.

The Princess Firuzah thereupon told him the evil tidings; to which he hearkened and spoke no word; but he rose and went forth a bent and broken old man.

He hastily summoned the Grand Vizier, Hasan, and bade him arrest the princes and cast them into the prison appointed for murderers, and to take heed that none escaped. Returning to the mourning mother, he comforted her, and bade her prepare to receive her daughter-in-law, whom he desired to have conveyed to the palace with all proper pomp and ceremony.

The surgeon was richly rewarded for his good services, and received a robe of honour, in addition to a bag of gold.

The Princess of Deryabar rode up to the palace on a fine white mule trapped with gold and diamonds, which had been sent from the royal stables, and behind her came cavaliers and soldiers on foot. The townsfolk cheered when they learnt that she was Codadad's bride, for the evil tidings of his death had not yet reached them.



Upon seeing the Sultan, who awaited her at the Palace door, the Princess dismounted and kissed his feet, in token of respect and veneration. She was tenderly raised by her father-in-law, who himself conducted her to the Princess Firuzah's apartment, where they all wept together for the dead prince.

The Princess of Deryabar was assigned a fine residence in the Palace, and aided the Sultan in superintending the construction of a magnificent marble mausoleum, beneath the dome of which a sculptured figure of Codadad was placed. ✓

When the building was completed, the grandees and nobles as well as the populace flocked there to celebrate the funeral obsequies of the hero. Solemn processions marched through the streets, and public prayers were held in all the mosques for eight days successively; but the ninth day was set apart for the execution of the princes, as the Sultan had decreed that they must die thus, to expiate the crime they had committed.

The townsfolk had assembled to gaze at the scaffolds, and await the arrival of the condemned princes.

Suddenly the eager buzz of voices was hushed, for criers were passing along the streets calling upon the citizens to arm themselves without delay.

One of the ancient foes of Harran, with a great army, had stealthily crossed the borders and would soon be in sight of the city, which was thus completely taken by surprise. The Sultan, at the head of such troops as he could hastily collect, marched out to meet the enemy on a plain beyond the city.

The battle was long and fierce; but at length the overpowering number of the foe surrounded the Harran troops so that there was little prospect of a single man of them escaping alive.

The last hope died in the Sultan's breast, and he glanced around him in a mute farewell to his country.

His gaze wandered across the plain, and was arrested by the sight of a large body of cavalry approaching at a pace so swift and sure that soon they were on the enemy's flanks. So furiously



did the new-comers fall upon the foe, that very shortly the whole of the invading force was utterly routed, and fled pell-mell before the pursuing horsemen.

The conquering band returned from the chase, and a mighty cheer broke forth from all the Sultan's army. They cheered as though they never would stop, for at the head of the intrepid company rode none other than their beloved Codadad.

The Sultan's joy was beyond expression, when he found his saviour to be his favourite son, whom he had mourned as dead.

As they rode along together towards Harran city, Codadad was delighted to learn that his mother and wife were both there, and that the Sultan had long forgiven and forgotten the cause of his displeasure with the Princess Firuzah. Runners had brought news to the city of the victory, and Codadad's opportune return, long before the army reached the gates. The streets were thronged with joyful crowds, so that the Sultan and his son could

scarce make way to the palace where Princess Firuzah and her daughter-in-law so eagerly awaited them.

When the first transports of joy were over, the Sultan cried, "O my son, relate us how it cometh to pass, that our eyes are gladdened by sight of thee!"

Thereupon Codadad told them that as he lay in the tent a peasant passing by saw that he was sorely wounded and like to die. The good man placed Codadad on his ass, and took him to his cottage, where he was carefully nursed and tended until the wounds were healed.

After recompensing the peasant for his care, Codadad wended his steps to Harran. On the road he encountered the invading army, and finding that they were marching by secret ways towards Harran city, made the matter known in the villages round about. Very soon Codadad found himself at the head of a considerable force, which arrived on the battlefield just in time to help his sire in the hour of need.

Thus they sat in pleasant converse, until the Sultan arose to leave them, saying, "Now shall all the princes who conspired against thy life be put to death."

"O my Father," pleaded Codadad, "I pray thee spare these young men, and pardon them freely as I do, for though they merit punishment, they are my brethren and your sons."

The Sultan was much affected by this generosity, and consented after some hesitation to forgive their offence. Codadad was now proclaimed sole heir to the throne and kingdom, in the presence of all the Court and the forty-and-nine princes whose fetters he struck off. He bore his brothers no malice, but ever loved them and treated them generously, and thus that which had begun in misery ended in joy.

All the people on hearing of the noble conduct of their hero applauded him, and loved him yet more than before, and his name and that of his consort was remembered in the land, even in the time of his children's children's children.

PRINCE AHMED
AND THE
FAIRY PERIE
BANOU

THERE was erstwhile in the land of India, a Sultan who had three sons, the eldest of whom was Houssain, the second Ali and the youngest Ahmed. He also had a niece, Nouronnihar, who had been brought up in the palace and shared the education of the princes ; so that she grew dear to her playmates, and when they attained to manhood, they all fell in love with her and desired to marry her.

The Sultan was sore troubled when he became aware of this, for he foresaw the impossibility of satisfying each of his sons, and they were all equally dear to him.

One day he called the princes to him, and presenting each of them with a large sum of money, bade them travel to far lands, and learn all they could of the manners and customs of the countries where they sojourned. "Moreover," said he, "to him, who bringeth me the rarest of curiosities, shall I award the hand of the Princess Nouronnihar."



The sons obedient to the desire of the Sultan made their preparations, and set out on their journey disguised as merchants. They travelled together until they came to a Khan which stood at the junction of three roads, each branching in a different direction. Here they took leave of one another, after agreeing to meet again, at the same spot, that day twelvemonth.

Prince Houssain bent his course to Bishangarh, the capital of which he reached after journeying for three months. Here he succeeded in obtaining a magic square of carpet which had the power of transporting him who stood upon it to any spot he desired, and this with the speed of lightning. Houssain felt that this was indeed the rarest of all curiosities, so after biding his time in the city, he had himself and the attendant who accompanied him carried on the carpet in the twinkling of an eye to the rendezvous where the brothers had arranged to meet.

Meanwhile Prince Ali visited Persia, where he bought an ivory tube which permitted him who looked through it to behold any object he desired to see. "This must, of a surety, be the rarest of all curiosities," said Ali, and quite content with his purchase, he returned to the meeting place, where his brother Houssain was already in waiting. When Prince Ahmed parted from his brothers, he wended his way to Samarkand, and in his wanderings there, he came across a hawker who had a magic apple for sale. This apple had the power of curing any and all diseases, and making the sick person well immediately the fruit was placed near his nostrils. The Prince gladly paid the forty thousand gold pieces which were demanded for this treasure, for he was certain that it must be the rarest of all curiosities. After testing its virtues upon a sick man, who was at once restored to health, he hied him India-wards to rejoin his brothers.

The three princes were overjoyed to meet again and each one displayed his "rarest of all curiosities" with pride. They duly admired Houssain's Magic Carpet, and Ali handing his Spying Tube to his elder brother, asked him to prove its powers there and then.

Houssain put it to his eye and expressed the wish to see his

cousin, the Princess Nouronihar ; in a moment his face blanched and tears coursed down his cheeks. The brothers alarmed at these signs of grief, enquired the cause of his dolour.

"Alas !" said he, " the Princess lieth upon her couch, sick unto death. O my brothers, an ye would see her once again, look now ere she hath breathed her last."

Ali and Ahmed took the Spying Tube in turn and gazed sorrowfully at the beautiful Nouronihar, who appeared to be in her last extremity.

"Had she but mine apple," quoth Ahmed, " the scent of it would soon restore her to health and strength, but alas ! we are so far away."

"The distance is of no import," said Hous-sain, " Sit upon my carpet and we shall be beside her in a moment."

Accordingly they sat upon the carpet and willed with



all their might and main to reach the Princess, and straightway they found themselves beside her bed. The alarm of the attendants at this sudden intrusion was turned to joy when they recognized the princes. Ahmed bent over the unconscious figure of Nouronnihar and held the apple to her nostrils. The effect was marvellous ; she sat up in bed, stretched herself and, opening her eyes as one just awakened from sleep, regarded the princes with astonishment.

After expressing their pleasure at her recovery, the brothers hastened to greet the Sultan, who received them with every mark of fatherly love, and thanked them for having been the means of restoring Nouronnihar to him. He listened patiently to the claims brought forward by his sons in regard to the respective merits of their curiosities, each one considering that *his* was the rarest. When he had examined the Carpet, the Spying Tube and the Magic Apple with equal interest, he remained awhile in deep thought.

“ O my sons,” said he, “ the prize may not be awarded to any one of you without unfairness to the other two. Albeit Ahmed’s Apple hath cured the Princess, it was by means of Ali’s Spying Tube ye learnt of her distress, and yet without the Carpet of Houssain, neither of these would have availed to save her life. So can I not, without injustice, give preference to any of these objects which are of equal value and marvel, therefore must I fix upon some other means whereby the victor may be determined.”

“ Go each of you and provide yourselves with bow and arrows, then ride forth to the plain where the horses exercise. I, with my Minister of State, the Grandees and Lords, will follow instantly, and to him amongst you three, who shall speed his arrow the farthest, will I give the Princess Nouronnihar for consort.”

The princes bowed to the wisdom of their sire, and providing themselves with bow and arrows, rode to the appointed place. As soon as all was in readiness, Houssain sped his shaft far along the level plain. Ali shot next and outdistanced the other, and lastly came Ahmed’s turn. He bent his bow and his arrow flew far ; but none could see whither it went. Knights and Courtiers joined in the search ; but Ahmed’s arrow was nowhere to be found. At length

the Sultan ordered them to seek no further and decreed that Prince Ali should be elected victor and receive the coveted prize.

So in due course Prince Ali and his cousin were wedded with the usual ceremonies and rejoicings. Grieved and disappointed, Prince Houssain left the Court, and, after renouncing his rights of succession to the crown, donned the habit of a Fakir, and retired to lead a hermit's life.

Prince Ahmed, likewise, absented himself from the marriage festivities, and spent his time searching for the missing arrow. On and on he went over hill and dale, until he came to a steep and craggy rock, and there, at last, he found it fallen flat upon a stone.

"Certainly 'tis mine and none other," quoth Ahmed, "but it passeth my understanding how a shaft could fly so far or fall in so strange a fashion."

Seeking to solve the mystery he looked about and became aware of an iron door which barred his further progress. It flew open at his touch and disclosed a subterranean passage, down which he passed without hesitation. Presently the way opened out and he stood in a spacious square, brilliantly lighted by lamps and candelabra. A large and stately palace fronted him, and as he gazed in wonderment at this fine edifice, a lady emerged from a portico and advanced towards him.

The lady was rarely beautiful, and all a-glitter with jewels that studded her resplendent garments and festooned her graceful form from head to foot. A bevy of fair damsels followed close behind her; but she was to them as is the noon-day sun to the twinkling stars.

Prince Ahmed saluted her with the salaam, which she returned with all courtesy and then said in accents honey-sweet, "Welcome, O Prince Ahmed, how fareth it with thee? Too long hast thou tarried ere coming hither."

The Prince thanked her for her gracious welcome and was delighted to receive an invitation to enter the palace.

The lady permitted him to seat himself beside her, and quoth she, smiling at his bewilderment, "Thou knowest me not, so it beseemeth me, O Prince, to tell thee who I am."



"As thou hast surely read in the Koran, our Holy Writ, the world is the habitation of mortal man and also of the genies who dwell beneath the ground. In me thou beholdest Perie Banou, the daughter of a mighty and powerful genie. Being of age to marry, I have, in accordance with our fairy custom, been permitted to choose the consort that pleaseth my maiden fancy best.

"Long time have I observed thee, and now do deem thee most worthy to be my liege and lord.

"'Twas I, standing invisible beside thee, who seized thy arrow as it sprung from bow, and brought it with me, so that thou, in seeking it, wouldst be led hence to the entrance of my realms."

Prince Ahmed hearkened as one entranced, the very heart of him drawn out by those dulcet tones.

"O loveliest of Beings," said he, "thou art in very truth my Queen, my Lady," and he took her hand and placed it on his breast and upon his eyes in token of his fealty and submission. The fairy replied, "An thy heart be true to mine, take my hand and plight me thy troth even as I pledge my faith to thee." Upon the Prince responding, "Freely do I give myself to thee to do thy will and bidding," Perie Banou replied, "Thou art my husband and I am thy wife." Thus were they joined in wedlock as it is ordained by fairy-lore and custom, while with dance and song the evening was brought to a close, and Ahmed's days with his fairy-wife flew by on golden wings in a paradise of beauty, joy and peace.

Thus six months passed in bliss and pleasure ; but at length the memory of his sire, the Sultan, became ever more insistent in the Prince's mind, so that he was fain to confess to Perie Banou, the longing that possessed him to see his father again.

The fairy, knowing how true he was to her, gave her consent that he should visit his father ; but warned him to speak no word of his marriage or aught that had since befallen him. He willingly promised to obey her advice, and left her with words of love and affection, and the assurance that he would return within three days.

The Sultan, meanwhile, was fretting and fuming on account of Ahmed's prolonged absence ; but the most diligent search had not revealed a single trace of his whereabouts.

When, at length, the errant Prince rode into his father's Capital, he was magnificently accoutred, and being escorted by twenty Cavaliers in richest attire, gave evidence of well-being and wealth, such as he had never before possessed.

The Sultan joined his subjects in offering him the heartiest of welcomes, and after expressing his satisfaction and delight in once more embracing his youngest and well-beloved son, demanded the reason of his long absence.

"O my Lord the King," replied Ahmed, "question me no questions, for though I dwell in joy and contentment, I may reveal naught that hath betided me." The Sultan satisfied to have his son beside him, sought not to discover his secret, and so, after three days, Ahmed wished him farewell, and returned to Perie Banou. From this time forth Ahmed spent three days in every month with his sire, and each time he came, his costume, equipage and escort were more splendid than on the previous visit. This magnificence aroused the envy and malice of one of the viziers, who was a favourite of the Sultan's, and he fell to poisoning the latter's mind against Prince Ahmed, first by insinuations, and then by open accusations.

"Who can say whence cometh the Prince or how he hath obtained his wealth and magnificence?" whispered the jealous minister in his master's ear. "Thou knowest," continued he of the evil tongue, "the youth departed hence in anger at the loss of the

Princess Nouronnihar, and now that he returneth with an ever-increasing escort, perchance he plotteth to avenge himself on thee, and will cast thee from the throne. Therefore beware, O King of Kings, beware ! for thou wottest not his power."

The Sultan waxing alarmed and most suspicious, sent for a sorceress to aid him, and bade her find out whither the Prince went when he was suddenly lost to sight, after leaving the city gates some distance behind him. On the morning of the day when the Prince was wont to conclude his monthly visit to his sire, the old crone concealed herself in a hollow near by the place where Ahmed found his arrow. From her hiding place she observed the Prince and his cortège enter the rocky defile and then suddenly disappear as though they had entered some subterranean passage.

"Of a verity," quoth the beldam, "he hath gone to the abode of the genies and fairies, in no other way could he have vanished thus from my keen gaze."

She now ran hither and thither in her endeavour to fix upon the underground passage ; but in vain, for the iron door was invisible to all mortals save Ahmed, who saw it by the grace of Perie Banou.

The Sorceress returned to the Capital to await the next visit of the Prince, designing this time to bring the Sultan the required information. When the time drew near, the old crone betook herself to the rock where she had lost sight of the Prince and his retinue, and lay in wait for his appearance. The Prince issued from the iron door followed by a great concourse of attendant genies, and as soon as the sorceress became aware of their approach she fell to moaning and groaning as one in mortal agony.

Ahmed reined in his horse, and bending over enquired what ailed her.

"Alack," she cried, "I have been seized with a grievous pain and can by no means rise and continue on my way." The Prince in his compassion ordered one of his cavaliers to take her up before him, and they all turned back to enter the iron door and return to the palace of Perie Banou. The fairy hastened to meet her consort fearing that something was amiss with him ; he thereupon assured



"A LADY EMERGED FROM A PORTICO AND ADVANCED TOWARDS HIM"

her that all was well and commended the sick woman to her loving care. Whilst Ahmed was speaking, Perie Banou gazed attentively at the sorceress and presently bade her women bear the old dame away and tend her with all possible kindness and diligence.

When the groaning bundle of rags was safely out of earshot, the fairy commended her husband for the kindness of heart which had led him to perform this deed of mercy. Then she added, "O my Lord, I will look to the case of this woman; but greatly do I fear that evil will come to us through thy good deed. The pain whereof she complaineth is, and I mistake not, but a pretence and a means to some other end. Nevertheless, go thy ways in peace, I will guard thee from harm." The Prince pursued his interrupted journey and was received by the Sultan with outward tokens of joy and pleasure, but his heart was filled with thoughts of fear and misgiving. The sorceress, cared for by Perie Banou's women, was given a potion, which they bade her drink, for it was the precious water of the Fountain of Lions which cures all sickness and pain. She swallowed the liquid and was left to rest upon the bed; but having found out that which she sought to discover, the sorceress soon sat up and cried aloud, "O the admirable draught, it hath already restored me to health and strength." When the women came in, she declared herself able to go upon her ways; but begged them to lead her to the lady first, so that she might express her gratitude. They led her through several sumptuous apartments to a hall of such splendour and magnificence that there was none to equal it in all the rich land of India. Perie Banou was seated here, upon a throne of massive gold adorned with the rarest and most precious stones of surpassing size and lustre.

On either hand stood fairies of peerless beauty, inferior only to that of Perie Banou herself. All this grandeur quite took the old witch aback, and she sank at the foot of the throne unable to utter a word.

The fairy, smiling gently, bade her maidens raise the prostrate figure and said, "O good woman, right glad am I to see thee cured of thy sickness, and able to proceed upon thy journey." She was

thereupon dismissed and escorted past the iron door by some of the attendants.

The sorceress assured herself that she was no longer observed and then retraced her footsteps, desiring to make sure of the position of the subterranean passage.

To her chagrin she was unable to find it, although she searched assiduously, and so was obliged to return to the city without having settled the matter.

At the instigation of the Vizier, whose tool she was, the sorceress did her utmost to provoke the Sultan's jealousy against Prince Ahmed. She succeeded so well, that after she had related her experiences in the realms of Perie Banou, the Sultan was so disturbed that he summoned the Vizier and his friends, to seek their advice.

"The remedy lieth in thine own hands, O King, thou hast but to seize the Prince and cast him into prison," suggested a Minister.

"'Twould be a pretty kettle o' fish for us, an thou didst so foolish a thing!" exclaimed the sorceress; "for prison walls cannot confine his retinue, who being genies can transport themselves where-soe'er they list, and thus Perie Banou would soon learn of this treachery. Rather turn the Prince's interest with the fairies to thy advantage, O King, and by demanding that which is difficult of attainment thou wilt either gain a gift of value, or should Prince



Ahmed fail to acquit himself of the task, thou canst so humble and shame him that he will come here no more." The Sultan hearkened to these words and prepared himself with a request to prefer to the Prince on his next visit.

When Ahmed came, punctual to his wonted time, the Sultan received him with assumed goodwill and felicitations on his marriage.

"It hath reached my ears," quoth he, "that the fairy, thy wife, obeyeth thy lightest request, therefore I pray thee obtain for me a pavilion that I greatly desire. This pavilion must be large enough to shelter all my army and yet small enough to lie within the hollow of a man's hand." Prince Ahmed was much embarrassed by this demand; but promised to do what he could to please his sire. He took a hasty leave and departed at once to pour forth his trouble in Perie Banou's sympathetic ear.

He could in no way account to her in what manner the secret of his marriage had leaked out, or why his father had made this petition, and he looked both troubled and perplexed. His spouse replied, "O my Lord, as I foresaw, the ancient woman thou broughtest here was a witch and spy, and she hath disclosed thy secret; but cast the gloom from thy countenance, for the wiles of the wicked shall harm neither thee nor me. As regards the tent, why trouble thyself about so small a matter? Right gladly will I grant thy father's wish."

She called to Noor-Jchaun, her treasurer, desiring her to bring such and such a tent, as Ahmed had described, and in a few moments, the girl returned with a small case in her hand. From this she produced a miniature pavilion, so small that Ahmed thought, "surely my good Perie Banou mocketh me;" but the fairy reading his mind, bade Noor-Jchaun spread it out upon the plain, behind the palace.

When the tent was pitched it was so large that two armies with all their baggage and forage could have sheltered within; but when it was struck and folded, its compass was so small that Ahmed held it in his hand as he galloped with all speed to present the gift to the Sultan. Instead of being delighted at the speedy fulfilment

of his wish, the Sultan grew more suspicious than ever, and sent for the witch to advise him once more.

She considered awhile and then said "O King of the Age, send thy son to procure thee the water from the Fountain of Lions, which hath great merit in curing disease; if he fail in the quest he will never again show his face at Court."

The Sultan, under pretext of his failing health, made his second request to Prince Ahmed, saying that he felt sure his son would not refuse to get him this miracu-

lous water so that his life might be prolonged. The Prince returned to Perie Banou and reluctantly stated his father's further demand. "O Light of my Heart," he cried, "though I tell thee what hath transpired, thou shalt do what it pleaseth thee in the matter, for verily I am ashamed to ask this of thee."

Quoth the fairy, "O my Husband, thy sire shall have no cause of complaint against thee and me, for though he hath been counselled



vilely by the wicked witch, he wotteth not that the Fountain is guarded by four lions, fierce and terrible, who tear to pieces all mortals who would pass them. But thou (an Allah be compassionate) shalt gain the water without hurt or harm; only thou must heed my counsel and depart not from it."

She herewith drew a clew of thread from an ivory box, and worked it into a ball with her needle.

"Take this," said she, "and thou wilt presently learn the use of it; furthermore thou shalt have two horses swift and strong, and upon one thou must ride, whilst the other will be laden with a freshly slaughtered sheep, cut into quarters. I shall provide thee with a phial wherein to bring the water, and at day-dawn thou must ride forth, leading the second horse.

"When the iron door is closed behind thee, cast down the ball of thread, and follow it as it runneth before thee of its own accord. The ball will stop its course within the gates of a castle where the Fountain is situate. Heed not the ramping and roaring of the lions, but throw to each of them a quarter of the sheep with which thou wilt be provided. Ride with thy best speed to the Fountain, fill thy phial and pass out ere the lions have devoured their meat, only so canst thou return safe and sound."

Prince Ahmed conscientiously followed the fairy's rede, and after throwing the meat to the lions, who appeared most angry and ferocious, he reached the Fountain, obtained the water and passed out with joy and thankfulness. As he turned in his saddle to look behind him, he observed that he was followed by the lions.

He drew out his scimitar to defend himself, whereupon one of the beasts approaching close, nodded his head and wagged his tail in friendly wise. From that time they escorted the Prince on either side and at the rear, until they reached the Sultan's palace. As the citizens and courtiers beheld the four great beasts, they fled in terror and hid within their houses, so that the streets were soon as lonesome as the desert. At the door of the palace the lions departed, and the Prince going in, sought audience of the Sultan and laid the phial at his feet. The Sultan expressed his gratitude;

but the heart of him was full of envy and ill-feeling towards the son, who had braved great danger to do him service.

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now demanded a third service of the Prince and one he deemed impossible of attainment. "One thing more do I require of thee, O Son of mine," said he, "'tis the last and final boon that I will ask. Bring me a dwarf, of height no more than three feet, with a beard not less than twenty ells in length. Upon his shoulder he shall bear a bar of steel thirteen score pounds in weight, which he can twirl about his head and wield as easily as though it were a cudgel of wood."

The Prince left the Palace vexed beyond measure at his sire's outrageous demand, and scarce had courage to tell his loving help-mate of this new request. "Now indeed am I put to shame," said he to her, "for I trow there is no such dwarf in all the world."

"Do not disturb thyself," replied Perie Banou, "this task is neither so difficult nor so dangerous as the last; for the dwarf is not far to seek. In a moment I can summon him, for he is none other than my brother Shaibar, a good and affectionate fellow to those he liketh, but with a quick anger for them who kindle his resentment. Fear him not, O my Lord, though his appearance be uncomely, he will not harm thee."

Said Prince Ahmed, "O Wonder of the World, what care I howsoever he looketh; so long as he be dear to thee, he shall be to me as friend and kinsman."

Perie Banou cast some incense into a golden chafing-dish and a thick smoke rose therefrom; whereupon she cried, "here is Shaibar

my brother," and Ahmed perceived a manikin, three feet high, with a lump on his chest, a hump on his back, and a countenance of surprising ugliness. On his right shoulder he bore a quarter staff of steel that weighed thirteen score pounds and he had a beard twenty ells long.

He glared at the Prince, crying, "O my Sister, who is this mortal I find with thee?"

"This is Ahmed my beloved consort," she replied. Thereupon Shaibar looked upon the Prince with friendly mien and said, "Is there any service I can render him?"

"Yea, O my Brother," answered Perie Banou, "for his sire, the Sultan of India, hath a desire to see thee. Ahmed would fain gratify his curiosity, so wilt thou accompany the Prince to the Palace and make thy salaam to the King?"

"Lead on, O Prince," responded Shaibar, "and I will follow thee."

"Nay, there is no such haste," cried his sister, and she held him back to tell him privily of the Sultan's ill-will towards his youngest son, and of the malicious counsels of the witch to which he was ever ready to hearken.

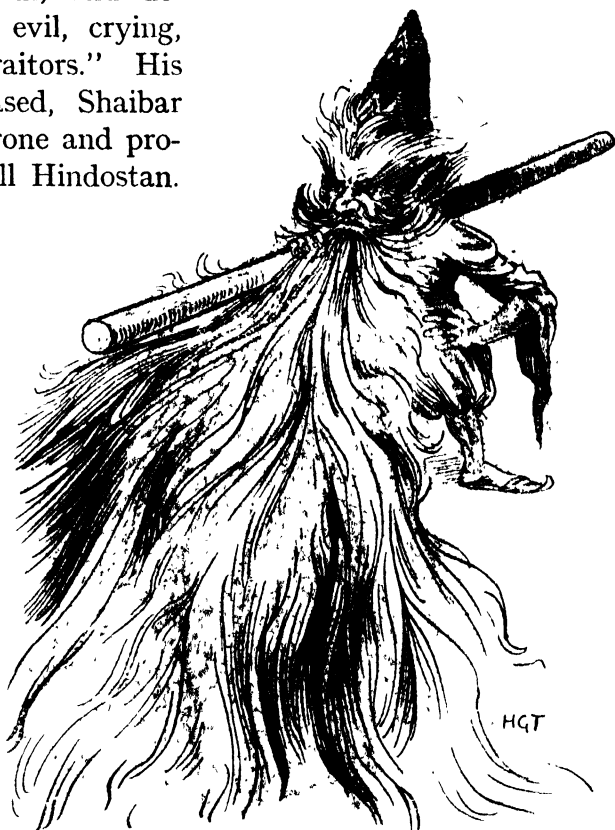
Ahmed and his strange companion reached the Capital at day-break and demanded audience of the Sultan. The latter received them in his chamber, surrounded by his ministers and courtiers; but Shaibar was in no wise confounded, he advanced towards the throne and said, "O King, thou hast desired my presence, and I have come to obey thy summons." Never had the Sultan seen so hideous a creature, and he held his hands before his eyes to shut out the sight of the dwarf. Shaibar, enraged at this display of pusillanimity and rudeness, raised his staff and brought it down with a resounding thwack upon the Sultan's head, so that the latter fell stone-dead upon the floor. Shaibar now turned upon the Vizier and those who had joined in the plot against the Prince, and destroyed them all by a few blows with his mighty staff.

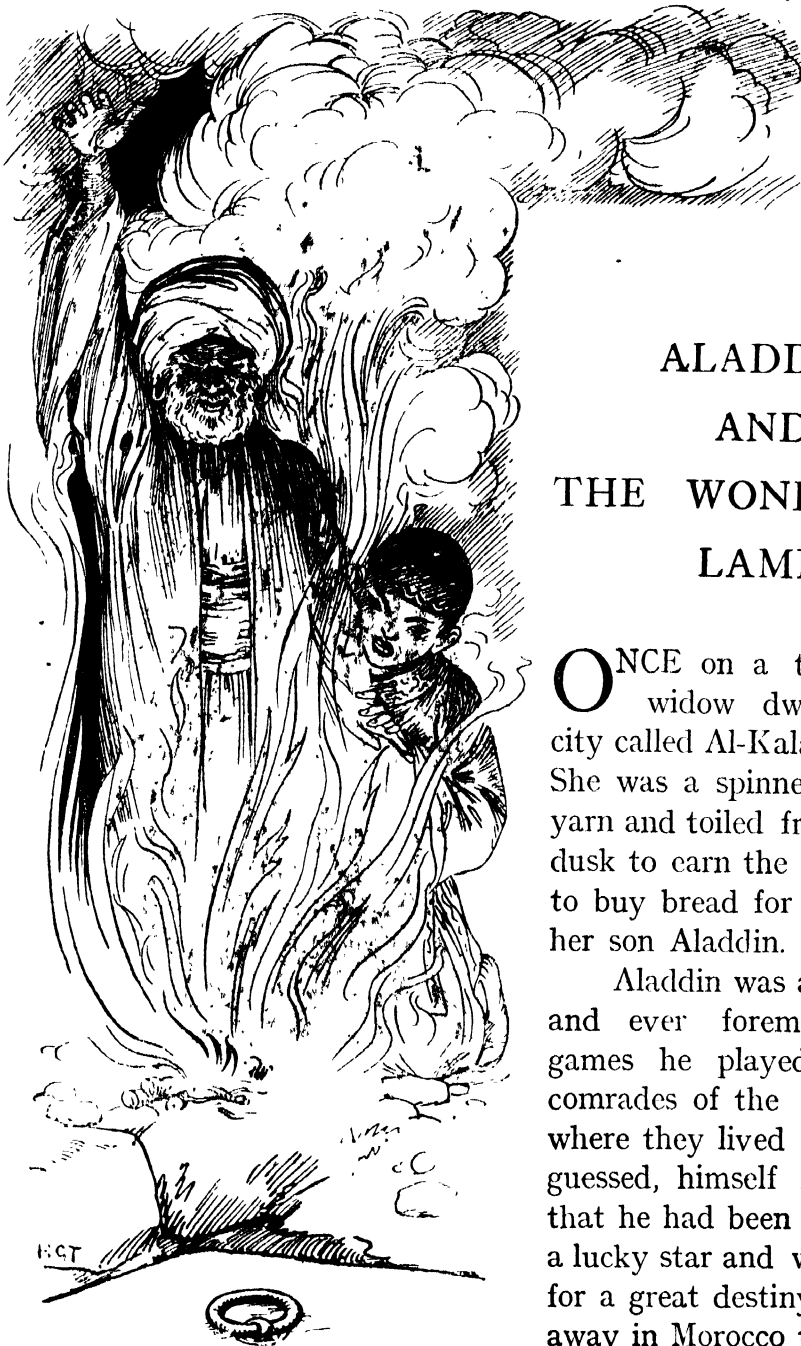
"Now bring me the witch," yelled the infuriated dwarf; whereupon the affrighted attendants dragged the beldam before him. He

raised his staff once again, and despatched the worker of evil, crying, "so will I reward all traitors." His anger being now appeased, Shaibar led the Prince to the throne and proclaimed him Sultan of all Hindostan. The people took up the cry, and "Long live King Ahmed," echoed through the streets of the city and was carried from town to town: for all were rejoiced to be governed by Ahmed their best beloved prince.

Perie Banou was hastily summoned and shared in the splendid ovation accorded to her consort; and well might they all rejoice, for no better Sultan and Sultana ever ruled over a happier or more peaceful people.

Prince Ali and Nouronihar were awarded the governorship of a fine province; but Prince Houssain refused to leave his humble dwelling where he could spend his days in meditation, untroubled by the world and all its vanities.





ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP

ONCE on a time a poor widow dwelt in the city called Al-Kalás in China. She was a spinner of cotton yarn and toiled from dawn to dusk to earn the wherewithal to buy bread for herself and her son Aladdin.

Aladdin was a merry lad and ever foremost in the games he played with his comrades of the mean street where they lived ; none ever guessed, himself least of all, that he had been born under a lucky star and was reserved for a great destiny. But far away in Morocco there was a

certain Moor, a Sorcerer, who discovered by his magic that this boy, the son of a poor tailor, had been elected heir to a great treasure.

This treasure belonged to the Jann (a tribe of giants dwelling in the under-world) and lay concealed in a subterranean cave.

Now the Sorcerer, on account of his great learning in magic, was well aware that none might enter the cave save he whom the Jann had decreed. He nevertheless determined to possess himself, by some means or other, of the Wonderful Lamp which was the most precious thing in the secret hoard, bestowing power on its holder over all the Treasure and giving command of the Slaves of the Lamp. To effect his purpose the Moor had to journey over land and sea, a weary way, until he came to Al-Kalás, near which city the Cave was situate. There he sought out Aladdin's mother, and, under pretence of being brother to her dead husband, soon won her confidence and the boy's affection—for they were simple folk and easily beguiled.

And it came to pass that on a certain day the Magician and the boy fared forth together to see the beauties of the city. Hand in hand they wandered on past palaces and pleasure places in lordly gardens, by fountains and pavilions, one finer than another, until they reached the barren country beyond the walls.

Aladdin had grown weary and begged the Magician to turn homewards; but the latter urged him on, crying, "O son of my brother, this day I will show thee a sight thou never sawest in all thy life."

At last they came to the spot for which the Sorcerer had all the while been seeking, and he forthwith fell to making incantations and weaving spells so that the very ground commenced to quake and presently it sprung apart with a mighty noise. Aladdin was sore affrighted; but the old man dragged him to the spot where the ground in opening laid bare a slab with a ring in the centre.

"Pull, O my Lad," said the Magician, "and fear not; do but my bidding and thou shalt see many marvels and possess riches so great that kings shall envy thee."

Aladdin lay hold of the ring, pulled as he had been directed, and the slab in swinging back revealed a stairway leading underground.

"Descend, my son," quoth the Magician, "but take heed to do my bidding. Below in the cave are four halls full of gold and silver, touch nothing there, but pass through to the garden where the trees bear rare and strange fruit. There thou wilt see a copper Lamp hanging in an alcove; extinguish the light, take the Lamp and place it securely in thy pocket. Then thou mayest refresh thyself with the fruit of which I told thee, and so long as thou obeyest me this Ring will save thee from danger," saying which the Magician drew off his signet ring and placed it on Aladdin's finger.

Aladdin thereupon descended the stairway, and, passing through the halls to the garden, took no leisure to look about him, until the lamp was secure in his pocket.

He now paused to admire the garden wherein every tree was hung with sparkling gems of great size and every hue, so that the eye was dazzled by their brightness. Aladdin, thinking the gems were fruit, plucked some and was disappointed—being but a little lad—that he could not eat them. "Alack!" said he, "they are naught but glass." However, the sparkle of the gems being pleasing to him, he filled his pockets and gathered as many as he could carry in his arms.

He reached the stairway thus heavily laden, and finding he could not climb the last step, which was a very steep one, called to the Magician, "O my uncle, I pray thee aid me over this step."

"Hand me the Lamp first," came the reply.

"Indeed I cannot reach it," rejoined the boy; "do but help me and I shall give it thee after."

The Sorcerer thinking it withheld by design, flew into a great rage, and being a man of hasty temper and unreasonable, he commenced to storm and rage and make magic passes so that the slab closed down and Aladdin was imprisoned in the Cave.

"Ho, thou son of a tailor," he cried, "if I cannot enjoy the Lamp, neither shalt thou; stay there till thou starvest."

So it came to pass that the Magician wended his way back to Africa, poor and disappointed, having lost, through his own folly, that which he had been to so much pains to gain.

Aladdin, finding himself shut into the dark passage of the Cave, ran hither and thither, but could find no way out ; all the doors were fast locked behind him by the sorcery of the Magician.

In dire straits the poor lad cried to " Allah the Merciful " to save him, and as he folded his hands in prayer he chanced to rub the Magician's ring. Immediately a strange and terrible form stood before him, and said, " Here am I ; thy Slave between thy hands is come ; ask whatsoe'er thou desirest, for I am the Slave of him who wears the Ring."

Aladdin was greatly alarmed at the apparition, but encouraged by the words, begged the Slave to set him upon the earth.

As soon as he uttered the request the ground opened and Aladdin, finding himself close under the city walls, made his way home at his best speed.

Three days and nights had been passed in the Cave and Aladdin's mother lamented and mourned, fearing she would never again find her son. How great was the joy when the widow once more embraced the boy, and how gladly she brought him every morsel of food she could find. As soon as he had eaten, the boy related his adventure with many maledictions on the cruel Sorcerer.

Next day there was neither bite nor sup in the house, and, hunger sharpening his wits, Aladdin bethought himself to sell the Lamp he brought from the Cave.

" Perhaps it would fetch more if it were cleaner," said the widow, so she brought some sand and commenced to rub the Lamp.

In a twinkling a huge and terrible-looking Genie stood before her, demanding, " What wilt thou of me ? Here am I, the Slave to whomsoever holdeth the Lamp, to obey all behests, I and the other slaves of the Lamp."

The widow on beholding the Genie gave a shriek and fell swooning to the floor.

Aladdin, with great presence of mind, rushed forward and



snatched up the Lamp, crying, "O slave of the Lamp, I am sore a-hungered, bring me somewhat choice to eat."

In a flash the Genie placed a splendid silver tray before him, set out with the choicest viands on a dozen golden platters, and there were flagons of wine and crystal goblets.

The Genie disappeared, and the widow soon recovered when the odour of roast meats filled the room.

What a feast it was ! not even the Sultan had such snowy-white bread or sparkling wines, but all good things come to an end, and at last the food was all eaten, and Hunger once more became the

unwelcome guest in that humble home.

The splendid platters were sold, one by one, and being ignorant of their value, Aladdin was finely cheated by the merchant who bought the goods.

When all the dishes were thus disposed of, Aladdin rubbed his lamp, and the Genie again stood before him ; and as promptly obeyed the order to bring a tray of food similar to the previous one.

Again Plenty reigned, and the widow and her son feasted until all the food was gone.

Aladdin now learnt to sell his platters to such good advantage that they enabled him to support himself and his parent in frugal comfort for several years.

So the boy grew into a man who had daily increased in knowledge and experience by intercourse with the Merchants and Jewellers in the Bazaars. From the latter he learnt the value of gems, and thus came to know how rare those were which he had gathered in the Enchanted Garden.

One auspicious day it was proclaimed by the Crier in the Market Place that the Sultan's daughter, the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor, would even then repair to the Hammam, so all folk were commanded to retire to their houses and steal no glimpse at her. Whoso should disobey this mandate would suffer death.

Now Aladdin, who had from time to time heard much talk of the beauty of the Princess, was seized with an invincible curiosity to behold her. To this end he concealed himself behind the door of the Hammam, and by good fortune the lady raised her veil as she entered, thus enabling him to gaze upon her through a chink.

Verily a lovely vision greeted those prying eyes, for Buddir-al-Buddoor had skin like a magnolia petal kissed by the setting sun, and her eyes were as starlight on a deep, dark lake.

Aladdin's whole being was overwhelmed with love for the Princess, and he walked home like one in a dream.

Sleep forsook him, and not even the most toothsome morsels could tempt his appetite. His mother was as one distracted to witness such trouble, and presently her solicitude drew from him the confession of the affection he had conceived for the Princess.

"O my mother, I beseech thee, entreat the Sultan to accept me as suitor for the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor," he supplicated.

"Now surely thou art as one without sense," replied his parent, "thinkest thou the Sultan desireth such an one as thou for his son-in-law? Nay, sooner will he put both thee and me to death."

But the widow's words and entreaties failed to turn the young man from his purpose ; and at last fearing that he might die for very chagrin, she consented, albeit most unwillingly, to carry his petition to the Sultan.

She prepared for the unwelcome task, and then bethought herself that she lacked means to buy the gift, which it was customary to offer when seeking audience at the Palace.

" O my Son," said she, " how can I go before the Sultan having no gift to offer him, surely it is not seemly that I stand there empty-handed."

Thereupon Aladdin comforted her and said—" O my dear Mother—thy gift shall surpass all others in splendour."

He then gave her the gems from the Enchanted Garden, and when they were arranged in a china bowl the light of them dazzled the eyes.

The widow tied the bowl in a kerchief, and departing on her errand entered the great hall of the Palace without let or hindrance. for the Sultan, in his benignity, gave audience thrice weekly to all who came to plead a cause or claim justice.

The poor woman placed herself opposite the Throne and waited throughout the time that the Divan (*levée*) was held, without finding courage to make her petition.

She attended several *levées* in this manner until at length the Sultan noted her and called to his Grand Vizier to lead her before the Throne.

" O Woman," said the Sultan, " what business brings thee here ? "

The widow bowed till her forehead touched the ground, and proffered her request with fear and trembling.

When she had said her say she waited meekly for the death sentence that she most surely expected ; instead of which the Sultan burst into laughter and replied, " O Woman, I have a curiosity to know what is in that kerchief that thou holdest so fast."

She opened the bundle and offered the bowl wherein the gems glittered like the sunshine.

The Sultan could not contain his joy at this fine gift ; never had he seen the equal of even the least of the jewels. The Grand Vizier who stood beside him echoed the words of praise and wonder, until his royal master cried, " Verily whoso valueth my daughter at such a price surely meriteth her in marriage," which greatly alarmed him, for the Princess had been promised for his son.

" O King of the Age," he pleaded, " decide not this matter so hastily ; deign but to grant three months' delay so that my son may procure a far costlier gift."

The Sultan hearkened to the Vizier's request ; but he knew full well that nowhere in the world could anything be found to surpass these gems.

He therefore bade the widow return to her son and tell him that he must take

patience for three months, after which he could claim the Princess for his bride. He thereupon dismissed the matter and soon forgot all about it.

Great was Aladdin's joy at the tidings his mother brought him ; he thanked Heaven with all his heart and settled down to await the time when the Sultan would fulfil his promise.

Two months of the allotted time had passed, when one evening the widow, finding herself short of oil, fared forth to purchase some.



When she came to the market place she was surprised to observe that all the shops and houses were decorated with flowers and tapers, and there was a great going to and fro of soldiers and officials in fine uniforms.

She enquired of the oilman the reason of this display, to which he replied, "O Woman, art thou a stranger and not of this city that thou knowest not the Princess Buddir-al-Buddoor will wed the Vizier's son to-night? Even now the bridegroom goeth from the Hammam to the Palace."

The widow went home weeping, and imparted the bad news to her son: "Verily," she sobbed, "the Sultan hath broken his word to thee, my boy."

Aladdin was distraught at her words, until he remembered the Wonderful Lamp. He at once regained his good spirits, ate his supper with appetite, and when the meal was finished retired to his chamber to summon the Genie.

The giant appeared immediately and said: "Ask what thou wilt of me, I am thy Slave, I and all the Slaves of the Lamp."

"O Slave of the Lamp," Aladdin answered, "an it were feasible, I fain would hold converse with the Princess ere she sleeps to-night. Canst thou bring her to me?"

"To hear is to obey," said the Genie, and he hastened away to carry out his master's behest.

Wherefore it came to pass that as the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor lay upon her couch that night, she was lifted bed and all and carried by invisible hands to Aladdin's chamber.

Meanwhile the Vizier's son was seized by one of the Janns and confined in a dark, foul cupboard, where he passed a night of great discomfort.

The Princess, half dead from fright, had perforce to listen to Aladdin whilst he recounted the story of her father's perfidy to him. She made no reply, and he left her to seek what slumber she could in such unpleasant quarters.

At daybreak the royal couple were conveyed to their apartments in the Palace much affrighted by their adventure.

The same adventure befell them again on the following night, and they could offer no explanation as to how or where they had been taken. The Sultan feeling that *someone* must be to blame, and not knowing whom to punish, turned upon his son-in-law, and, casting him forth from the Palace, cancelled the marriage and ordered the festivities to terminate.

When the appointed three months had run their course, the widow duly presented herself at the Divan and prostrated herself before the Sultan crying, "O King of the Age, the hour hath come for thee to redeem thy bond."

Now when the Sultan's eye fell upon the woman, he suddenly recollected the rash promise he had made. Like on distracted he sought counsel of the Vizier.

"O Vizier," he exclaimed, "the woman who brought the jewels now claims fulfilment of my pledge,—yet 'twere a vile thing to give the Princess to a pauper's son."

"O Mighty Monarch," replied his wily minister, "can the King not give with one hand yet take with the other? Consent thou to the marriage, but attach thereto a condition that none can accomplish."

"Inshallah!" said the Sultan, "I shall demand that which he cannot pay."



Returning to the Divan he addressed the widow thus : “ Know, O Woman, that the word of the King is his bond, and thy son may claim my daughter when he hath paid her dower. Forty platters of virgin gold shall he bring, filled with precious stones, none smaller than a pigeon’s egg. Forty maidens, fair and white, with two score slaves as black as night, shall bear these on their heads.”

Aladdin heard of the Sultan’s demand with derision. “ I give thanks,” he said, “ that so small a thing is required of me.”

He retired to his chamber and summoned his faithful Genie to whom he related his needs.

“ To hear is to obey,” responded the Slave, and in the course of an hour he returned with the white maids, the black slaves, and the forty platters full of gems.

The widow marvelled greatly at the goodly company that filled her house, and fell to praising Allah and the Lamp all in one breath.

Aladdin forthwith opened the house door and begged his mother to lead the company before the Sultan.

The neighbours were filled with wonder when they beheld so splendid a procession, and eager spectators soon thronged the streets.

The maidens, beautiful to behold, in their gold embroidered robes inset with precious stones, bore upon their heads the platters covered with costliest brocades of rainbow hues, and beside each lily-white damsel walked a negro slave as black as ebony.

Into the Great Hall marched all the retinue, forming a semi-circle before the Throne ; they prostrated themselves with one accord, and then arising uncovered the platters which shone like the sun at mid-day.

Neither the Sultan nor his courtiers could restrain their astonishment and admiration ; never had they witnessed so fine a spectacle.

Aladdin’s mother, humble in bearing and poorly clad, stepped before the brilliant throng and cried, “ O my Lord, I bring thee a

gift for thy daughter ; deign to receive it and to grant my son the desire of his heart."

Delighted beyond all measure the Sultan gazed from the maids all fair and glittering to the platters of purest gold, and his heart went out to the widow's son who was the donor of this princely gift.

"O Mother," said he to the widow, "let thy son come hither that he may wed my daughter with all speed."

The proud and happy woman flew home on the wings of the wind to give her son the tidings and bid him prepare for the wedding festivities.

The Genie arrived almost before Aladdin had touched the Lamp and carried him off to a splendid Hamman where he was bathed and scented by invisible hands till he seemed like one new born. Princely robes were brought him and the son of the poor tailor was transformed into a resplendent being. A gaily caparisoned steed awaited him, and eight and forty mounted slaves bedizened with gold and diamonds acted as his body guard when he rode forth from the little home he would soon leave for ever.

Aladdin had meanwhile not forgotten his good mother, who was clad like a Sultana and had twelve bejewelled slave girls to attend her. Ah ! how her heart swelled with joy and pride when her son rode before her scattering largess amongst the throng of people who had assembled in the streets.

Though there were many who recognised the tailor's son, none envied his good fortune, for his kindly nature endeared him to all who knew him.

The Sultan met his new son-in-law with demonstrations of joy, and embraced him tenderly when he proffered formal proposal for the hand of the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor.

A great feast was now made, and Aladdin bore himself as one who was accustomed to the way of courts.

The marriage contract being soon drawn up, the knot was knotted as is customary in those parts, and the hour drew nigh when the bridegroom might visit his bride.

Aladdin arose to depart, but the Sultan withheld him, saying,

“ O my Son, why wouldst thou go hence ; wilt thou not complete the marriage ceremonies this day ? ”

“ O King of the Age,” responded Aladdin, “ it behoveth me to find a fitting habitation wherein to conduct the Princess. Deign to grant me a plot of ground whereon to build a pavilion near the Palace.” The Sultan very willingly bestowed the land on so desirable a son-in-law, and a charming spot in the gardens was soon agreed upon.

Aladdin returned home, and, rubbing his Lamp, bade the Genie build him a house, “ worthy of the loveliest lady in the world,” without delay.

At sunrise the following morning the new pavilion upreared itself in the Sultan’s garden.

It was a fairy palace ; beautiful as a dream were the walls of marble inlaid with gold and rare mosaic work. Delicate minarets and spires showed themselves against the darkness of the cedars in the gardens, and fountains uprose to the strains of heavenly music. Beneath the central dome was a great hall with four and twenty windows encrusted with gems of every kind and colour in the world. Every detail was complete, from the jars in the Treasury, overflowing with gold and silver, to the pots and pans of precious and rare metal in the kitchen.

The Sultan arose betimes, and, going to his casement to repeat the dawn-prayer, glanced towards the rising sun. He scarce could believe his eyes, for there before him, all rosy with the morning glow, stood the pavilion, which had been set up in a single night.

“ Surely,” quoth he, “ there is none other in all the kingdom to compare with Aladdin.”

After Aladdin had inspected his pavilion with rapture, he repaired to his little home in the mean street, to prepare for his nuptials.

Clad even more sumptuously than the day before, and all a-glitter with diamonds and rubies, he mounted his gaily caparisoned steed and rode through the highways to the Palace. His retinue rode before and behind, showering gold amongst the

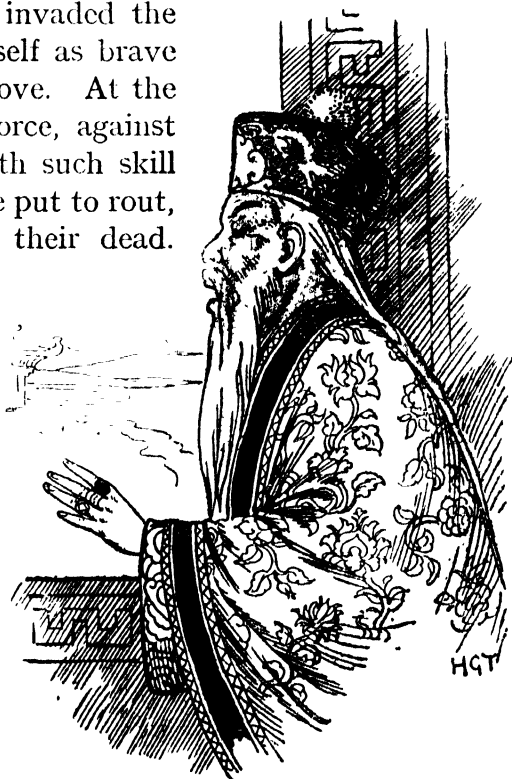
populace, who shouted till they were hoarse, "Hurrah for Aladdin, Heaven bless him!"

The Sultan received his son-in-law with tears of joy, and there was great rejoicing and feasting and decorations and music all over the City, from the Palace to the poorest hovel. When the sun was low, a litter bearing the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor, and the widow, was carried with much ceremony over the magnificent carpet which Aladdin had asked the Genie to lay between the palace and the pavilion, and thus the Princess entered her new home. She was pleased with everything she saw, but most of all did she love and admire her husband; and was delighted that he had outwitted the Vizier's son.

They lived happily together, doing deeds of kindness, so that the people blessed them five times daily when they prayed.

Once on a day an enemy invaded the land, and Aladdin proved himself as brave in war as he had been true in love. At the head of the army he led his force, against the great and powerful foe, with such skill and valour, that the enemy were put to rout, leaving the field strewn with their dead. All the kingdom made festival after this great victory, and the populace were wont to say, "After Allah in heaven comes Aladdin on earth."

All this long while the Magician, far away in Morocco, believed Aladdin to be dead, and the treasure he coveted unattainable, so he dismissed the matter from his thoughts and gave himself up to other wickedness. But by an unlucky chance he learnt



the true state of affairs and immediately set out for China, determined to win the Lamp and ruin Aladdin at the same time.

He had recourse to necromancy to discover the whereabouts of the Lamp, and found that Aladdin kept it on a shelf in his own apartment.

The crafty sorcerer bided his time until Aladdin was away on a hunting expedition. Then, taking a basket of fine bright lamps on his arm, he walked the streets crying, "New lamps for old! Who will exchange!"

The townsfolk deemed him a madman for making so unprofitable an offer, and the children of the streets followed him about, laughing and hooting.

The old man heeded them not; but continued on his way, crying, "New lamps for old! Who will exchange!" until he reached the Palace.

The Princess who was in her bower looked out of the casement on hearing the noise and laughter, but seeing only a poor old man, she sent a slave to find out the cause of the commotion.

When the Princess heard that the madman wished to exchange new lamps for old ones, she regretted that those in the pavilion were all of gold or silver—for being a woman, she loved to make a bargain—

Thereupon a slave said, "O my Lady, there is an old brass lamp in the Emir Aladdin's chamber, shall I take it to that foolish man so that he can prove his words."

"Ay," replied the Princess, "it can have no value, take it as thou wilt."

The exchange was soon effected, and the Magician, who was not slow to recognize the Wonderful Lamp, made off apace with it.

When night fell he rubbed the Lamp and the Genie stood before him, awaiting his command. "Slave," said the Sorcerer, "transport the pavilion with all its inmates and also myself to my own garden in Africa."

In a moment the order was executed, and the Magician, the pavilion and all its inmates were set down in Morocco.

Next morning when the Sultan said the dawn-prayer he glanced, as was his wont, towards the pavilion, and to his horror the edifice was not to be seen. When he had assured himself without a doubt that not only the pavilion but also the Princess had been



spirited away, his rage and grief knew no bounds. In his anger the Sultan denounced Aladdin, saying he was a sorcerer, a trader in black magic, and that he must die. He gave orders to seize Aladdin on his return from the hunt, and cut off his head without any more ado. News of the Sultan's cruel command soon spread amongst the soldiers and populace, and they rose as one man to protect their hero.

They rushed to the Palace, barricaded the gates, and threatened to raze the building to the ground should any harm befall Aladdin.

Under the circumstances the Sultan deemed it safest to make peace with his son-in-law, and ordered him to be brought before him.

When Aladdin was unbound and ushered into the royal presence, the Sultan cried, "O traitor, where is my daughter, the light of my life?"

"O my Lord," replied he, "I know not that aught hath befallen her."

The Sultan led him to the window, and indicating the empty space where "the Wonder of the World" had stood, demanded the pavilion and his daughter to be restored forthwith.

At first Aladdin was too much amazed to reply; but recovering himself he said, "O King of the Age, in truth I know not where they are."

"Then go forth and find them," the Sultan commanded, "and if thou discover them not in forty days I will cut the head off thee."

"O my Lord," responded his son-in-law, "an I find them not, mine head will I cut off myself to give to thee." He departed from the Palace bowed down by grief, wandering hither and thither, not knowing where to seek. For four days he roved aimlessly, and at length too weary to heed his footsteps, overbalanced and would have fallen into a stream but for a rock, to which he clung. Whilst holding thus, he rubbed the Ring, by chance, against the stone, and the Genie of the Cave at once stood before him.

Aladdin was overjoyed and cried, "O good Slave, bring me back my wife, and the pavilion, which have disappeared I know not whither."

"O my Lord," quoth the Slave, "thou hast commanded that which lieth not in my power to do. I am the Slave of the Ring, this matter pertaineth to the Slave of the Lamp."

"Then I beg thee, O Slave, to set me down beside the pavilion wheresoever it may be."

Aladdin closed his eyes, and opened his eyes, and there he stood outside the pavilion under the burning African sun.

The Princess espied him from her casement and bade him come up silently for fear of the wicked one, the Magician, of whom she was terrified.

After their first transports of joy had passed, Aladdin learnt from his wife the cause of their misfortunes, and he at once set himself to circumvent the villain who had outwitted them by a trick.

The Princess related with bitter tears, that the Sorcerer threatened to marry her—without fail—as soon as the Sultan cut off Aladdin's head. To prove his power so to do, he had shown her the "Wonderful Lamp," which he carried in his bosom, and had taunted her with being the cause of her husband's undoing.

It being close on the hour when the Magician was wont to visit the Princess, it behoved Aladdin to make his plans expeditiously. He called to a slave to bring him two beakers, one of silver, the other of gold, both of which he filled with wine; but in the golden one he dropped also a potent sleeping-draught.

He now enjoined the Princess to proffer the golden goblet to the Magician, and solicit him to drink some wine with her in good fellowship.

Scarcely had he finished his preparations and concealed himself behind the arras, when the Sorcerer arrived. The Princess did Aladdin's bidding, and the Magician, delighted at the friendly demeanour of one who had hitherto treated him with disdain, willingly accepted the golden goblet from her hand. No sooner had he quaffed the wine than he fell back in a deep slumber. Aladdin rushing from his hiding place secured the Lamp, and called his slaves to take away the wicked man and put him to death.

The Lamp once more in his possession, a moment sufficed to transport the pavilion, with all therein, back to the old place in the Sultan's garden.

When the Sultan once more embraced his beloved daughter, he wept bitter tears of repentance for his harsh conduct to

Aladdin ; and the bond of affection between him and his son-in-law now became stronger than before.

But their trials were not yet ended ; for the Magician had a younger brother who likewise was expert in the black art, and he, learning the manner of his elder's death, resolved to avenge him.

Disguised as a holy woman named Fatima, he gained admittance to the pavilion, where he endeavoured to compass the

destruction of the
" Wonder of the World "
and all who therein dwelt.

He was foiled by the Genie of the Lamp, who warned Aladdin of his danger, and thus enabled him to punish the pretended holy woman by a death that was richly deserved ; and from that time forth he and his well-beloved Princess lived in peace and happiness. The years passed and the Sultan was gathered to his fathers, so Aladdin and Budbir-al-Buddoor reigned in his stead. They were loved by all and every one, until the time came when they, too, were called hence into the great Unknown.





SINDBAD THE SAILOR

HINDBAD was a poor porter who dwelt in Bagdad, in the reign of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid. It chanced one warm day that he had a heavy burden to bear, and being aweary, sat down to rest outside a fine mansion.

The sound of sweet music intermingling with the singing of birds reached him through the open casements, and as pleasant odours of savoury food greeted his nostrils, he concluded that some festive entertainment was being held within.

Seeing a servant standing by the gate he asked who might be the owner of the house; which question seemed to surprise the man. "Of a verity thou must be a stranger in the city," he

replied, "else wouldst thou have heard of Sindbad the Sailor, who is famous for the seven voyages he hath made, and is rich beyond all reckoning."

Thereupon Hindbad made answer, "Alack! how different is Sindbad's lot to mine. Each day must I bear heavy burdens from morn to eve, yet can I scarce earn barley-bread wherewith to feed my family; whereas thy master leads a life of ease and pleasure, and knows neither travail nor hardship."

When Hindbad had thus expressed himself, another servant came out of the house and asked the porter to come within, as his master desired to see him.

Hindbad followed, and was ushered into a stately hall where a number of people were seated about a well-spread table. At the head sat Sindbad the Sailor, a venerable gentleman with a long white beard.

When the porter entered and looked timidly about him, Sindbad bade him draw near and take a seat at his right hand. He plied Hindbad with food and wine, and when the repast was over, thus addressed him.

"Know, O Porter, it was by accident thy words reached me through the open casement; and feeling that thou art in error concerning myself, I would fain set thee right in the matter. My wealth and ease were not acquired without toil and hardship, as thou and all this company will judge, an ye have patience to listen to an account of what I have endured, in my voyaging to and fro, from country to country and sea to sea.

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

My father, a prosperous merchant, died and left me a goodly inheritance, which I, in the heedlessness of youth, soon squandered. Then finding myself well-nigh ruined, I collected what little remained of my fortune, and bought therewith goods and merchandise. With these I made my way to Bassorah and there embarked, in company with other merchants, upon a vessel outward bound on a trading expedition. Our course lay towards

the Indies through the Persian Gulf, and we touched at many ports where we sold or bartered our goods.

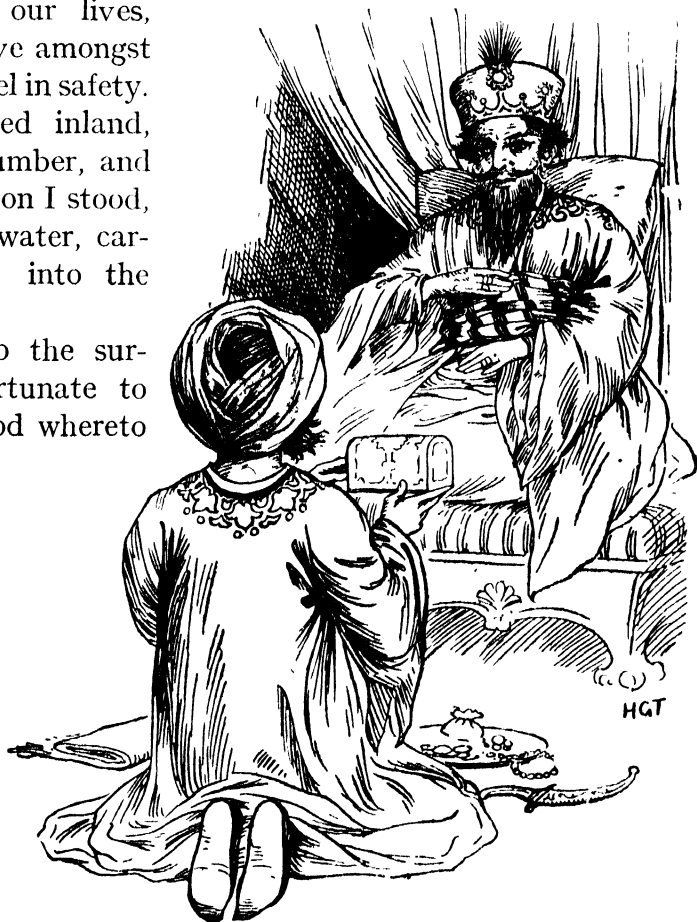
One day we came to a low-lying verdant island, and the Captain permitted us to land, so that we might indulge in such sports and exercise as pleased us.

Whilst thus occupied, we suddenly became aware of a violent trembling underfoot, and at that moment we heard the voice of the Captain crying, 'Run for your lives and get aboard; where you stand is not an island but the back of a fish, whereon the sand hath settled and trees have grown. Hasten or you will be drowned.'

We fled for our lives, and the more active amongst us reached the vessel in safety. I, having wandered inland, was not of this number, and the monster, whereon I stood, sank beneath the water, carrying all upon it into the depths.

I struggled to the surface, and was fortunate to find a piece of wood whereto I clung; but for this support I must inevitably have been drowned.

Meanwhile the Captain had hoisted sail and now sped away, regardless of those who still struggled in the sea. For hours I was



buffeted by the waves ; but at length was cast upon the shore of an island. I lay exhausted on the strand, until, revived by the warmth of the sun, I went in search of food.

Finding an abundance of ripe fruit and a spring of water, I was heartened to go exploring, and presently came to a fine pasturage whereon horses were grazing. There were several men in charge, and one of them advanced towards me and asked who I was, and how I came there.

I replied, ' I am a waif from the sea, cast upon these shores by the waves.'

The men, who were grooms of Mihrjan, king of the island, invited me to accompany them to the Capital, whither they were about to take some horses.

I gladly did so, and the good fellows lost no time in making my case known to their king. I was summoned into the presence, and, upon hearing my tale, the king treated me as an honoured guest, and I tarried some time at the Court.

One day as I stood by the shore, I descried a ship entering the harbour and recognized it as the vessel on which I had sailed from Bassorah. As soon as the anchor was cast, I went aboard and claimed my bales of goods from the Captain, who could scarce believe his eyes when he saw me. As soon as they were handed over to me, I selected therefrom the most valuable contents, and carrying them to the palace, presented them to King Mihrjan as a gift.

He expressed his pleasure at my good fortune, and made me a valuable present, in return for mine to him. I exchanged my goods for spices and other commodities, and embarked on the same ship, as it was now homeward bound.

In due course we reached Bagdad-city, and having realized a fortune by the sale of my goods, I bought a house and all that appertains thereto and lived in comfort."

Sindbad, having concluded the history of his first voyage, presented Hindbad with a hundred gold pieces, and invited him to return on the morrow.

Next day, Hindbad came to Sindbad's house, garbed in his best, and after being served with meat and drink, in company with the other guests, listened with interest to the narration of

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"Having once tasted the delights of travel, I soon wearied of the eventless existence I was now leading, so I put to sea on board a merchant vessel, having provided myself with merchandise of all kinds, for trade. We made a prosperous voyage, bartering and selling with good profit, until we came to an island, which in spite of its extreme fertility appeared quite uninhabited.

We landed and enjoyed walking amidst luxuriant fruit trees and fragrant flowers. I wandered on and on, till at length, being weary, I sat beneath a tree and fell asleep.

I know not how long I slumbered, but awoke to find that the ship had sailed away leaving me behind, alone and forgotten.

I fell to weeping and lamenting; but this availing naught, bethought to look about me, and climbed a high tree in order to gain a wider view.

From my point of vantage I descried a great white thing a long distance off; and without loss of time I scrambled down and made towards it.

On a closer view the object proved to be a smooth white dome of great compass. It was just the sunset hour, and suddenly it became quite dark as though a cloud had obscured the sun. I marvelled greatly when I discovered that this darkness was due to a huge bird, so wide of wing, that, as it flew, it veiled the sun completely.

'Ho,' said I to myself, 'that must be the bird Roc, whereof the travellers tell, and the dome is none other than its egg.'

The bird hovered over its egg, and then settling itself upon it, went to sleep with its legs stretched behind it on the ground.

I unwound my turban and tied myself therewith to one of the great legs, hoping thus to be carried away from this lonely isle.

At dawn the Roc rose high in the air, carrying me with it, and after a long flight again descended to earth.

I unloosened my bonds and fled from the vicinity, though truth to tell, the bird had never noticed me.

I was now in a barren cleft betwixt high mountains, and as I walked along, I perceived the valley was strewn with large diamonds. I regarded these with pleasure, until I became aware of a great number of monstrous serpents a short distance away. This filled me with apprehension, for I doubted not that with the waning of daylight, these creatures would issue from their lairs in search of food.

Weary and disheartened I sat down, and must have fallen into a doze, for I awoke with a start as a large piece of raw meat fell with a thud beside me.

Not a soul was to be seen, but every now and again, a lump of raw flesh would descend from the rocks and fall into the valley.

As the meat lay on the ground, I noted that the diamonds adhered to the sticky surface, and this recalled to my mind a tale that I had hitherto disbelieved. It was said, that merchants desiring to gain the splendid diamonds that lay upon the ground in an unapproachable valley, threw down lumps of meat even as I had observed. They then awaited in concealment amongst the rocks until the eagles, which are in great numbers thereabouts, pounced on the flesh and bore it aloft to their nests.

The men would then rush out with great clamour and frighten away the birds, so that they could remove the gems that had stuck to the meat.

'If this be so,' said I, 'here is the means of my deliverance,' whereupon I filled my pockets and wallet with the largest and choicest diamonds.

I then lay upon my back and fastened a large piece of meat to my breast. No sooner was this done, than an eagle swooped down, and gripping the meat carried it up, with me clinging thereto.

The eagle flew to its nest on the mountain-top, but as it deposited its burden, there arose a great clattering which frightened the bird away from its meal. I loosed myself from the meat and stood beside it, to the terror of the merchant who had come to collect his spoil. Assuaging his fears, I promised to reward him from my choice store of gems if he would permit me to accompany him.



He willingly agreed, and conducted me to the site where the expedition was encamped.

I joined the party, and we fared safely together to Bagdad-city, where from my great riches I gave freely to the poor, and lived well and merrily until I wearied of my idleness."

Sindbad here concluded the story of his second voyage, and giving Hindbad another hundred gold pieces, bade him return on the morrow to hear

THE THIRD VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"As I told you yesterday, I grew tired of being idle, so

I again took passage on board a merchant-man bound for a long voyage.

We called at many ports, trading with more or less success, until we were overtaken by a terrific gale, which drove us from our course.

We sailed on, not knowing whither, until we approached a rocky island. When the Captain espied the land, he commenced to tear his beard and cry aloud.

'O Captain, what ails thee?' we asked, and he made reply, 'O my Brethren, an evil destiny hath brought us to an island, the denizens of which resemble apes; and they are of such ferocity that none cometh out of their hands alive.'

As the words left his lips, we beheld a multitude of tiny creatures swimming towards the ship.

They were covered with hair, and hideous of countenance, and climbed up the sides of the vessel with the agility of monkeys. In a twinkling they furl'd our sails and gnawed every rope and cable in twain, so that the ship was carried by the tide and stranded on the coast.

Despite their small size, we did not dare to attack these creatures, for they swarmed in such multitudes as to completely overpower us.

They forced us to land on the island, and made off with the vessel, leaving us stranded on the shore. We managed to subsist on berries and fruits, and walked until we reached the interior of the island, where we came upon a large house, the gates of which stood open.

We entered a hall containing a number of braziers and cooking utensils, and about them were scattered great heaps of human bones.

We trembled at the sight, fearing I know not what, but our alarm was well-founded, for at that moment a huge, black giant as tall as a date-palm came upon us. His single eye burned like a coal of fire in the centre of his forehead, and long teeth like the tusks of a boar hung over his ugly lips. His ears dangled over his shoulders, and he had nails like the claws of a lion.

This dreadful apparition caused us such horror, that we lay upon the floor like dead men.

The blackamoor considered us awhile, and then picked me up, handling me as a butcher doth a sheep he is about to slaughter.

By a lucky chance I was a lean man, so he let me go, and selected the Captain, who was plump, in my stead. He killed the poor fellow with one blow, and then roasted him on a fire which he built up in a brazier. After demolishing his victim, the giant lay down and slept until morning, when he arose and went out.

As soon as the monster had departed we took counsel, one with the other, and made a plan whereby we could escape from our terrible fate.

We waited in trouble and tribulation, until the giant, having returned and roasted and eaten one of our number, laid himself down to sleep as on the previous night.

Ten of us now stepped quietly forward, and took two iron spits from among the cooking utensils. We heated these red hot and then with one accord drove them into the blackamoor's eye, so that he became stone-blind.

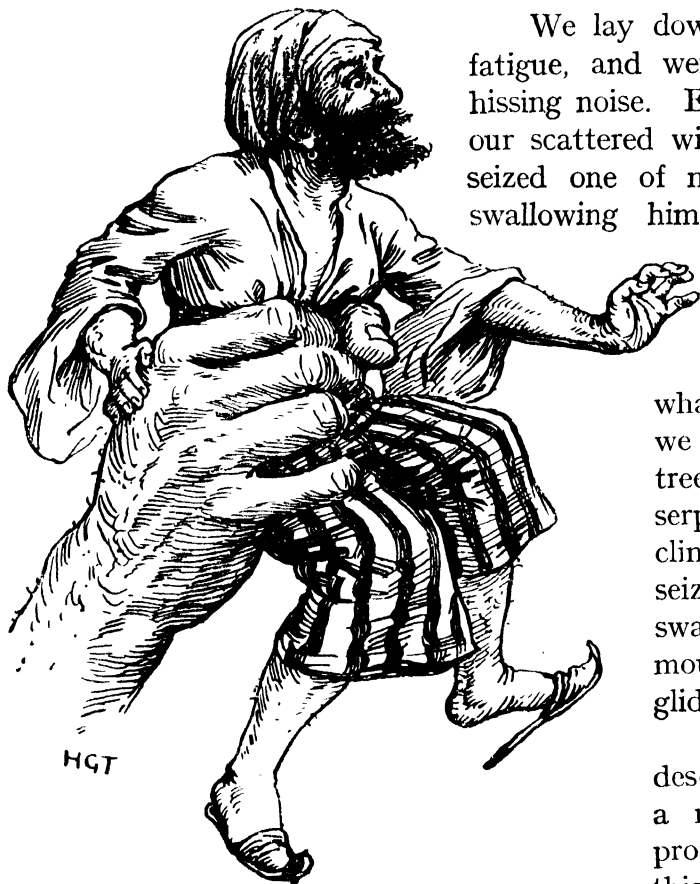
He started up yelling in agony, and stumbled about trying to catch us; but we eluded him, and he went out of the door still howling and screaming.

We ran helter skelter to the seashore, and quickly collecting some wood, bound it into rafts, and put out to sea with rough paddles hastily made.

We had not gone far, when the giant appeared, supported by two blackamoors, more terrible, even, than himself.

We paddled desperately, but the ogres fell to pelting us with rocks, and wrecked all the rafts, save the one that held me and two companions.

By the mercy of Allah we escaped those fiends; but spent many hours fighting for life on our frail craft. Carried by wind and wave we were presently cast ashore on an island, where we were able to refresh ourselves with fruit and water.



We lay down to sleep off our fatigue, and were awakened by a hissing noise. Ere we could collect our scattered wits, a great serpent seized one of my comrades, and, swallowing him whole, went its way.

Sorrowing and in mortal terror we knew not what to do. For safety we climbed into a high tree; but at dusk the serpent came back, it climbed up the trunk, seized my friend and swallowed him in one mouthful before it glided away.

At daybreak, I descended and found a means whereby to protect myself from this new terror, for

having collected a quantity of wood and brambles, I built a rampart around the tree, and then climbed aloft. When the serpent returned, its attempts to scale my rampart were fruitless, and being thus frustrated it departed.

Deciding not to suffer another night of horror, I went to the shore with the intention of throwing myself into the sea. What was my joy when I discerned a ship amidst the waves; my frantic signals were observed by those on board, and a boat put out to rescue me. I was astonished and delighted when I found myself not only safe, but once more on the ship which had sailed away, leaving me asleep upon the shore, on my second voyage.

When the Captain and crew recognized me, my goods were at once handed over, so that I was able to trade at the stopping-places on the way home ; thus augmenting my wealth which was now considerable. So ended my third voyage ; to-morrow I will relate what befell on the fourth."

Hindbad received his wonted guerdon, and gladly returned on the morrow to hear of

THE FOURTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"The next time my love of adventure urged me to set forth on my travels, I embarked, as usual, on a sea-worthy vessel, and sailed from place to place in company with a goodly band of merchants.

One day we were overtaken by a squall, that wrecked the ship, so that many of the crew and passengers were drowned.

My good fortune did not desert me, and I succeeded, with several of my fellows, in reaching the shore of a fertile island.

Seeing some houses in the distance, we made for them hoping to obtain hospitality and shelter. As we drew near, a band of negroes came out, and, seizing us, bore us to their king.

He signed to us to be seated, for we understood not the language, and had food set before us, the like of which I had never seen before, and had no appetite to eat. My comrades partook of it, and such was the effect upon them, that they became quite stupid, and permitted the negroes, who were cannibals, to kill and eat them one by one.

It chanced that I was in bad health, and so wasted as to be mere skin and bone, in consequence of which the savages felt no desire to eat me. They took so little notice of me, that one day I managed to give my keepers the slip, and sped with all haste away from the settlement.

I tramped along for seven days and nights, resting awhile, and gathering herbs and grasses to stay my hunger. On the eighth day I came across some white people engaged in picking pepper. My heart leapt with joy when I heard them speak Arabic, mine own language.

Taking compassion on my sufferings, they carried me with them when they sailed back to their own island. On arriving there, their king deigned to receive me, and listened to my adventures with interest. He afterwards gave me clothes and commanded an officer to take care of me.

The Capital was a busy and thriving city; but I was surprised to note that the citizens and nobles all rode their horses bareback and without stirrups or bridle. On inquiry, I found that these objects were unknown in the country. I thereupon sought the aid of a carpenter and blacksmith, and together we made a good saddle, bridle and stirrups. These I presented to the king, who was mightily pleased, never having ridden in such comfort before.

Soon the grandees and citizens were thronging to me, desiring saddles, so that I amassed considerable wealth by selling them at a high price.

The king was pleased to show me great favour, and married me to one of the principal ladies of his Court, but she fell ill and died not long after our marriage, and then, unhappily, I found that, according to the custom of the country, it was my fate to be buried with my dead wife.

In spite of my protestations, I was supplied with seven small loaves and a jar of water, and then lowered into a deep pit, but my coffin was left open, and this enabled me to escape.

My burial place was a subterranean cavern, full fifty fathoms deep, with passages that appeared endless, as I groped about them. The opening through which I had been let down was closed by a huge block of stone, and never a ray of light penetrated anywhere.

One day, when on the point of starvation, the sound of a stealthy footstep and the breathing of some animal, made me start up with renewed animation.

I followed the sound, and at last after winding in and out of the innumerable tortuous passages, beheld the light of day streaming through a hole in the rock.

I scrambled out, and found myself upon the sea-shore. My first act was to offer up a prayer of thankfulness to the Merciful One, who had sent a wild beast to prowl about the coast just at that time, and thus lead me to safety. Whilst searching for herbs wherewith to satisfy my hunger, I looked up, and saw a vessel close inshore. I waved my turban, and called to the Captain to take me on board. A boat was put off, and the Captain and crew all treated me with the greatest kindness, when I had related my story to them.



We made a good voyage, and in due course I reached Bagdad-city, full of gratitude for my safe return to my home and kinsfolk."

Here Sindbad paused, and bidding his guests return on the morrow, he gave Hindbad the usual gift of one hundred gold pieces, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

THE FIFTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"After a time, I again became possessed by a longing to visit foreign lands, so I packed my bales of merchandise in readiness for departure, and bought a fine newly-built ship.

Having hired a captain and crew, and arranged with a party of merchants as passengers, we sailed away, going from one country to another, trading as we went.

We chanced to pass a desert island, and some of the merchants begged to land, as they were desirous of inspecting a large white dome, half buried in the sand, that had attracted their attention.

When they came near the dome, they discovered it to be a gigantic egg, which they broke open with hatchets. Inside it was a large bird, just on the point of emerging, and the merchants not realizing that it was a young Roc, proceeded to cook and eat it.

They then returned to the vessel, and we were preparing to depart, when suddenly the sun became obscured as by the passing of great dark clouds.

We looked up and saw two giant Rocs overhead; they circled round the site where lay the fragments of the egg, and uttered angry cries.

We put out to sea, fearing their fury, and the Rocs flew away; but our satisfaction was short-lived, for the birds returned, each carrying an enormous rock in its claws.

They flew over the ship and let their burdens fall. One piece of rock dropped into the sea; but the other came plump amidship; and with a crash our trusty vessel broke into fragments. Everyone on board was either crushed to death or fell into the sea.

I seized a floating plank, and getting astride, paddled with my feet, so that I directed its course to the shores of an island that I saw in the distance.

The island was a veritable Garden of Paradise, fruitful and fertile. I walked inland and presently came to the bank of

a stream whereon an ancient man was seated. I saluted him and he returned my greeting by signs that seemed to say, 'Take me on thy shoulders and carry me across the stream.'

Believing him in need of assistance, I took him on my back, carried him across the water, and bent down to enable him to get off more easily. But this he would not do, nay, he settled himself the more firmly, and wound his legs so tightly around my neck that he well-nigh strangled me, and I fell fainting to the ground.

This did not serve to dislodge him, and there he sat drumming me so hard with his heels that I was obliged to rise for very agony.

From that time I was his slave, never for a moment did I get quit of him. He forced me to do his bidding by beating me with his feet, which caused more pain than the lashing of whips.



I bore my misery some time ; but on a lucky day I came to a place where several gourds had fallen from a tree.

I took a large one, cleaned and dried it, set it in the sun, and then filled it with grape juice, there being an abundance of this fruit on the island.

When we came again to the place, the juice had become strong wine, of which I drank a long draught, and felt so sustained and comforted that I commenced to sing and dance.

The old man signed to me to give him some of the wine, so I handed him the gourd and he drained it to the dregs. He now grew very lively and swayed from side to side on my shoulders, and by degrees the grip of his legs became easier about my neck.

With a sudden jerk I threw my burden to the ground, where he lay in a deep slumber.

I picked up a stone, and smashing his skull, was rid of him for ever.

Thereafter I dwelt in peace, until a passing ship took me aboard. When I had related my adventure to the Captain, he exclaimed, 'Thou hast borne the Old Man of the Sea upon thy shoulders, and art the only one who hath ever escaped him alive.'

Chance brought the vessel to a port known as the City of Apes, and I landed with the view of exploring the place. I wandered further than I had intended, and when I returned to the landing-place the vessel had departed without me.

A citizen taking pity on my destitution and misery, supplied me with a sack of pebbles, and permitted me to accompany a party of people who were going to collect cocoanuts.

We journeyed to a grove full of lofty trees, which had such high smooth trunks, that no man could climb them. Numbers of apes swarmed amongst the branches and we pelted them with the pebbles we had brought in our sacks. This treatment annoyed the apes, and they thought to avenge themselves by throwing down cocoanuts, the only missiles within their reach.

By the time our pebbles were exhausted, each of us had a sackful of nuts which was worth a large sum of money.

I made many similar expeditions, and by the time a homeward-bound vessel called at the port, I was possessed of a good store of nuts and a large sum of money. Arrived safely at Bagdad-city, I distributed alms and gifts, and returned to my old merry life, and so ended my fifth voyage."

Hindbad went home the richer by another hundred gold pieces, and came on the morrow to hear



THE SIXTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

Said Sindbad, " Know, O my friends, that after I had spent some time in comfort and pleasure, a company of merchants came to me one day. As they conversed about their trade and travels in foreign parts, I was once more seized with a desire to fare forth to unknown countries. Undeterred by my previous experiences, I resolved upon another journey, and packed my bales forthwith.

All went well with me, until the Captain of the ship whereon I travelled, lost his course and steered into a dangerous current. The vessel was driven upon a mountainous island, and broke up

so quickly, that, in a few minutes, all aboard were struggling for dear life amongst the waves.

Some of us, I amongst the number, were fortunate enough to gain the strand, and on clambering up the cliffs, found ourselves upon the main land.

We wandered a short distance and came to a stream of fresh water, that meandered on, and then lost itself underground. Beneath the pellucid waters of this stream one could see the bed, which was covered with precious stones of extraordinary size and brilliancy. All about the banks lay rare gems of great value ; but amidst all this wealth, we were poor indeed, for we lacked food and every comfort of life.

Such food as we had in our wallets, was divided equally amongst us ; and when this was spent my companions expired, one by one, until I alone survived, being strong and hardy of constitution.

I buried the last of my comrades on the shore, and lonely and starving, I knew not what to do. As I sat by the stream the thought crossed my mind that every river must have an end as well as a beginning ; and this one would probably be no exception.

Acting on this idea, I built a raft from the wreckage on the coast, and having steadied it by a cargo of gems and precious ores, seated myself upon it, and let it float along the course of the stream.

The raft drifted down the current, and presently came to the place where the stream ran into a subterranean cavern. On and on it went, until, at length I lost consciousness, being spent for want of food.

When my senses returned, my raft had been made fast, and I was surrounded by a crowd of negroes, who regarded me with amazement.

‘Peace be upon thee, O my Brother, from whence comest thou ?’ said one of them.

I returned the salutation and begged for some food, which was quickly placed before me.

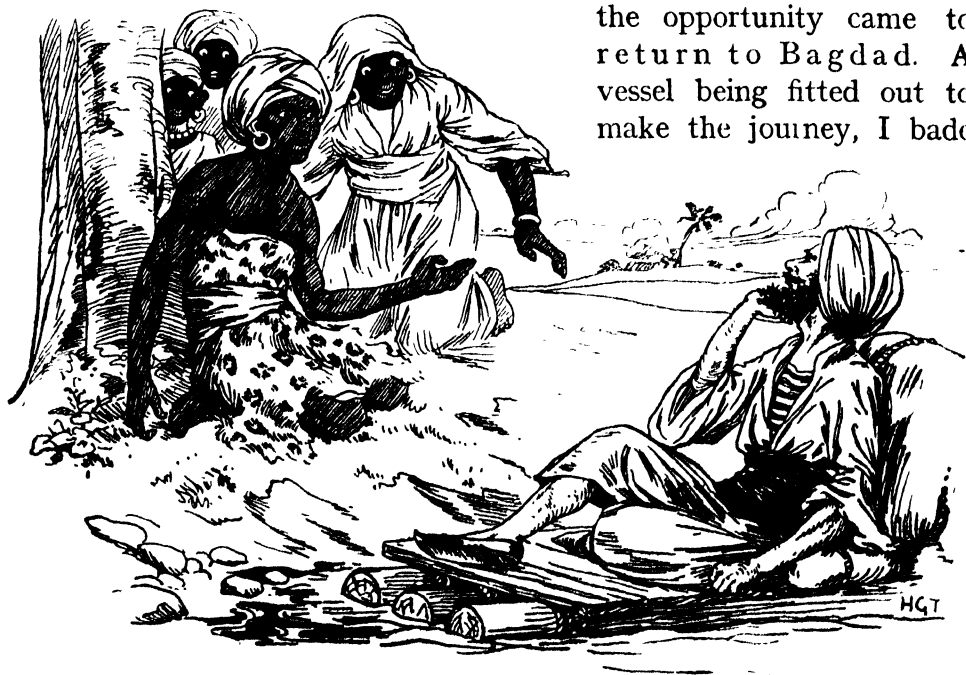
The blacks told me they were tillers of the soil, and said that never before had anyone been known to come from the country, beyond the great mountain.

Upon relating my story to them, one of their number offered to escort me to the Capital, so that I might seek counsel of their good king.

The monarch received me with great civility, and when I prostrated myself before him, bade me rise and seat myself beside the throne. He hearkened with interest to the recital of my many adventures, and examined the jewels I had brought from beyond the mountain, with expressions of pleasure and admiration.

I begged him to accept them all, and he thanked me gratefully for the gift. He thereupon ordered a lodging to be prepared for me in the palace, and ever regarded me as an honoured guest.

I stayed in Sarandib, which was the name of the island, for some time, and parted with regret from my good friends when the opportunity came to return to Bagdad. A vessel being fitted out to make the journey, I bade



the king farewell with expressions of gratitude and affection.

He bestowed upon me a gift of very great value, and also charged me with presents, including a slave-maiden of wondrous beauty, and a letter for the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, at Bagdad.

Wind and fortune favouring us, I came safely to mine own city of Bagdad, and seeking audience of the Caliph, handed him the letter and gifts from the King of Sarandib.

The Commander of the Faithful was graciously pleased to hear of my six journeys, and all that had befallen me, and dismissed me with a lavish gift.

I thereupon returned to my home, and forgot not the poor and needy, and made merry with my friends and kinsfolk, and so ended my sixth voyage."

Hindbad was made happy with one hundred gold pieces, and returned on the next day to hear Sindbad relate his seventh and last voyage.

THE SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"I settled down in Bagdad-city, and made up my mind to leave it nevermore, for I had endured many hardships and much suffering, and all desire for further adventures had gone from me.

One day, however, an officer came to my house and said, 'The Caliph hath sent me for thee.' I accompanied him into the presence, whereupon the Commander of the Faithful greeted me and said, 'O Sindbad, I require a service of thee; I would that thou shouldst be the bearer of a missive and a gift from me to the King of Sarandib.'

I was loath to accept this office, having had my fill of travel and adventure; but the Caliph insisted, and it was not for me to gainsay his command.

He charged me with the gifts and letter, and presented me with a thousand gold pieces to cover the expenses of the journey. I was thus forced to set out once more, and was soon upon my way to Sarandib. The winds were propitious, and I reached the island without mishap.

The King of Sarandib received me with great favour, crying, 'O Sindbad, I bless the day whereon I see thee once again ;' and begged me to remain at the Court. But having executed my errand, my one desire was to reach home, and there enjoy rest and tranquillity.

We sailed homeward before a fair wind ; but had only been out a few days when we were attacked by a band of corsairs, They boarded our boat, slew many of the crew and captured the rest of us. They bore us to an island where we were sold as slaves. I fell into the hands of a wealthy man, who took me home with him and treated me kindly.

One day he asked me whether I could shoot a bow, and upon my answering, 'I did in my youth,' he equipped me with a bow and arrows, and bade me mount with him upon an elephant.

We travelled some distance from the city, and just before dawn reached a dense forest.

My master ordered me to dismount, and climb a tree, and there lie in wait until some elephants came that way, when I was



to shoot at them with my bow and arrows. I waited, not without trepidation, until sunrise, when a distant stampeding informed me of the vicinity of a herd of elephants.

Presently they passed beneath my tree, and I shot, bringing down a fine large one.

I returned to my master, who praised my dexterity, and together we buried the great creature, purposing to remove the tusks, which are of great value, after the body had decayed.

Every morning, for eight weeks or more, I succeeded in bringing down an elephant ; but one day as I waited amongst the branches of a tree, I heard a great stampeding and trumpeting as of an exceptionally large herd. Hundreds of the creatures advanced towards me with trunks uplifted and a noise that was deafening. They encircled my perch, and one of them, winding his trunk about the bole, pulled up the tree, and threw it to the ground.

The elephant picked me up, as I lay almost stunned, and set me upon his back. I sat there too much frightened to move, and was carried a considerable distance, whilst the remainder of the herd tramped solemnly behind. Presently my captor lifted me off his back, and placing me upon a high mound, went away followed by the other elephants.

I got up, and found that I had been deposited on a great heap of bones and tusks, and was confident in my mind that this was the elephants' burial place. Their only reason for bringing me to this spot was, without doubt, that I might here collect all the tusks I required without shooting any more of their number. By dint of walking for a day and night, I reached my master's house, and related to him the sagacity of the elephants.

From that time forth we secured a great store of ivory from the mound. My master in token of his gratitude for the wealth I had been the means of bringing him, gave me my freedom, and secured me a passage on a boat bound for Bassorah.

When I bade him farewell, he presented me with a store of tusks of great value.

My heart leapt within me when I once more beheld

Bagdad-city — the House of Peace—and I hied me to the Caliph, and acquainted him with the success of my mission, and related what had betided me on the journey.

The Commander of the Faithful rejoiced at my safe return, and bade his scribes write my adventures in letters of gold ; said he, ' thy story is of all strange stories the most marvellous, and I will store the record of it in my archives, so that thy achievements shall not be forgotten.'

Then I returned to my house, and gave of my abundance to the poor, and gifts to all my friends and kindred.

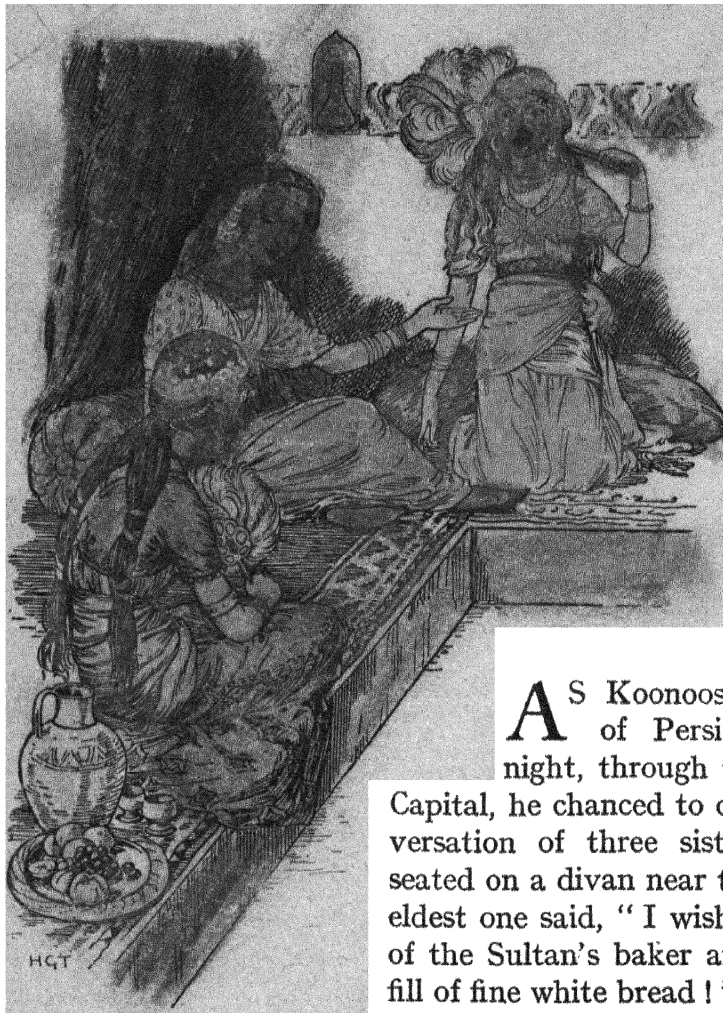
I now dwell in joy and serenity, and this ends the history of my seventh and last voyage."

Sindbad then addressed himself to Hindbad, saying, " Hast thou ever heard of any who hath suffered and toiled more than I, or is it not just that I should now enjoy my remaining years ? "

Hindbad salaamed and replied, " O my Lord, right well dost thou deserve every blessing, and art worthy of thy riches, since thou makest good use of them."

Sindbad thereupon paid him a hundred gold pieces, and bade him henceforth eat at his table, so that he never more should know want, nor lack a friend whilst Sindbad the Sailor lived.





THE THREE SISTERS

AS Koonooshaw, the Sultan of Persia, wandered at night, through the streets of his Capital, he chanced to overhear the conversation of three sisters. They were seated on a divan near the door, and the eldest one said, "I wish I were the wife of the Sultan's baker and could eat my fill of fine white bread !"

Replied the second, "A foolish desire ; I would rather marry the cook and taste of all the dishes prepared for His Highness."

"Ah !" sighed the youngest, who was beautiful as the dawn, "I would wed the Sultan himself and be the mother of a splendid prince."

Resolving to gratify the wishes of the sisters, the Sultan espoused the youngest, and the elder ones were respectively wedded to the baker and the cook.

After a time the elder sisters became furiously jealous of the

youngest, who was greatly loved and honoured both by the Monarch and all the people. They plotted together to bring about her downfall, and soon found an opportunity to carry out their evil designs. The Queen, who loved her sisters, one day charged them to carry her infant son to his sire, the Sultan. Instead of obeying her behest they placed the babe in a cradle and floated it down the stream which flowed near the palace. The child would have been drowned, had he not been observed and rescued by the Intendant of the Gardens, a wealthy official at the Sultan's Court.

During the following two years another prince and a princess were born, and on each occasion their wicked aunts secretly floated them down stream, and then hied to the Sultan with an insulting message from the Queen.

The Sultan, wroth at the supposed insolence, condemned his consort to imprisonment, which undeserved punishment was borne by the victim with great patience and humility.

Meanwhile the three children had been rescued by the Intendant, who took them home and brought them up as though they were his own. He built a magnificent country house to which he retired with his beloved charges, and died there after many years, without having revealed to his adopted children that they were foundlings. The princes, who were called Bahman and Perviz, were fond of hunting, and one day, whilst thus occupied, their sister Periezadeh entertained a holy woman who happened to pass that way.

The old dame was loud in her praises of the beautiful mansion, with its tasteful gardens and orchards.

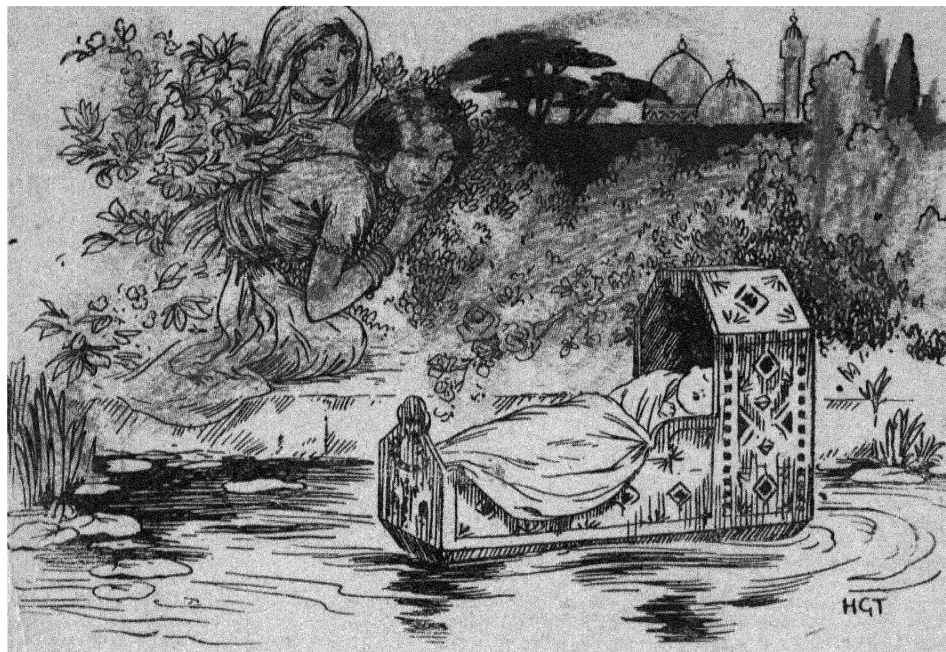
"Thy house only lacketh three things to make it perfect," said she.

"And what may these be?" enquired Periezadeh, who was very proud of her home.

"O my Lady!" replied the holy woman, "hast thou not heard of the Speaking-Bird, the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water?"

"Prithee tell me of them," said Periezadeh.

"The Speaking-Bird hath notes so melodious that they attract



all the birds in the neighbourhood to join in the song ; and the leaves of the Singing-Tree give forth, unceasingly, the sweetest of harmony. Thou shouldst plant the Tree near the Golden-Water, a single drop of which will suffice to make a fountain ever rising and falling, but never overflowing its basin."

Having given this information, the dame prepared to depart ; but Periezadeh begged her to say where these wonders could be found.

"Whosoever goeth in quest of them," responded the holy woman, "must travel eastwards along the road before this house. The first man he encountereth, on the twentieth day of his journey will direct him further."

When the brothers returned, Periezadeh related to them what the holy woman had told her, and they observed how eager she was to possess the three marvels.

"O sister mine," cried Bahman, "right gladly will I seek these treasures for thee."

Undeterred by Periezadeh's tearful entreaties to remain at home in safety, he set out the next day at dawn with a stout heart and well-armed against the perils of the road.

"Farewell," said he, "and fear not, an if thou wilt observe this knife I leave with thee, thou canst know how it fares with me. So long as all is well the blade will retain its brightness, but should blood appear upon its surface, thou wilt know that I am dead."

He travelled eastwards until the twentieth day, when he sighted a dervise sitting beneath a great tree.

Greeting the old man, who was covered from head to foot by his long matted hair and beard, he begged to be directed to the Speaking-Bird, the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water.

Said the dervise, "O youth, I am loath to direct thee, for the path thou wouldst travel is full of peril; many young braves have gone that way, but none return."

Bahman, however, was persistent in his entreaties, so the dervise handed him a bowl, saying, "Mount and follow this until it stoppeth at the foot of a mountain, when thou must leave thy horse and climb the path that is strewn with great black boulders. Thou wilt hear the clamour of threatening voices, but heed them not nor look behind thee, lest thou be transformed into a boulder, as have all the others who traversed this path. The treasures thou seekest are at the summit, and the descent is easy."

Bahman thanked the dervise and galloped after the bowl which rolled along until it was stopped by the base of the mountain. As he ascended the steep path an ear-piercing din, a hubbub and medley of voices broke forth around him. He heeded them not, until the sounds waxed loud as thunder and he grew confused. A voice close behind him suddenly uttered a cruel taunt and, forgetting the counsel of the dervise, Bahman turned round to punish his tormentor. In a moment he was turned into a great boulder encumbering the mountain path.

Meanwhile Periezadeh looked constantly at the knife and rejoiced to find it bright and spotless, but on the twentieth day the

surface became dull and drops of blood commenced to fall from the blade.

The princess was inconsolable, reproaching herself bitterly for whatever mishaps had befallen her beloved brother.

Perviz mingled his tears with hers ; and determined to set out without delay to learn his brother's fate, intending, at the same time, to seek for the three treasures that Periezadeh so ardently desired to possess.

Ere he departed on his journey, Perviz presented a string of one hundred pearls to his sister, saying, "An thou wouldst know how it fareth with me, count these beads. So long as I live they will run smoothly on the string ; but if they become fixed, thou wilt know that I am dead."

Perviz was a right valorous youth, but failed in his quest, as so many others had done before, and he too became a boulder on the mountain side.

Periezadeh sat sadly at home counting her pearls and praying for the safety of her brothers. On the twentieth day the pearls stuck fast and she knew that Perviz was no more. Losing no time in useless lamentation, she disguised herself in her brothers' garments and set out to find her beloved ones, or share their fate.

She found the dervise and questioned him, as her brothers had done, and from him received the same warnings. When she reached the foot of the mountain, Periezadeh drew out some cotton-wool from her wallet and plugged her ears. At first not a sound of the voices penetrated ; but as she ascended the rude words reached her in spite of her protection.

"What care I for taunts and insults," she cried, and the ruder the voices became, the less she heeded them.

The path was perilous, but, at length, she gained the summit. The noises were now louder than thunder, but Periezadeh pressed on and seized the cage wherein the Speaking-Bird perched. At once the noises ceased and only the melodious notes of the bird broke the silence.

"O my liege lady, I am thy slave," quoth the bird, "and

